

five hundred and thirty dollars and four cents, (\$51,248,530 04,) including interest on the public debt, making an aggregate of seventy-four million nine hundred and sixty-three thousand fifty-eight dollars and forty-one cents, (\$74,963,058 41,) leaving an estimated balance in the treasury at the close of the present fiscal year of four hundred and twenty-six thousand eight hundred and seventy-five dollars and sixty-seven cents, (\$426,875 67.)

PUBLIC DEBT.

The amount of the public debt at the commencement of the present fiscal year was twenty-nine millions sixty thousand three hundred and eighty-six dollars and ninety cents, (\$29,060,386 90.)

The amount redeemed since the first of July was three million eight hundred and ninety-five thousand two hundred and thirty-two dollars and thirty-nine cents, (\$3,895,232 39)—leaving a balance unredeemed at this time of twenty-five million one hundred and sixty-five thousand one hundred and fifty-four dollars and fifty-one cents, (\$25,165,154 51.)

TREASURY NOTES TO BE ISSUED.

The amount of estimated expenditures for the remaining three quarters of the present fiscal year will, in all probability, be increased from the causes set forth in the report of the Secretary. His suggestion, therefore, that authority should be given to supply any deficiency by the issue of a limited amount of treasury notes, is approved, and I accordingly recommend the passage of such a law.

TARIFF OF 1857.

As stated in the report of the Secretary, the tariff of March 3, 1857, has been in operation for so short a period of time, and under circumstances so unfavorable to a just development of its results as a revenue measure, that I should regard it as inexpedient, at least for the present, to undertake its revision.

THE ARMY AND THE NAVY.

I transmit herewith the reports made to me by the Secretaries of War and of the Navy, of the Interior and of the Postmaster General. They all contain valuable and important information and suggestions which I commend to the favorable consideration of Congress.

I have already recommended the raising of four additional regiments, and the report of the Secretary of War presents strong reasons proving this increase of the army, under existing circumstances, to be indispensable.

I would call the especial attention of Congress to the recommendation of the Secretary of the Navy in favor of the construction of ten small war steamers of light draught. For some years the government has been obliged on many occasions to hire such steamers from individuals to supply its pressing wants. At the present moment we have no armed vessel in the navy which can penetrate the rivers of China. We have but few which can enter any of the harbors south of Norfolk, although many millions of foreign and domestic commerce annually pass in and out of these harbors. Some of our most valuable interests and most vulnerable points are thus left exposed.

This class of vessels of light draught, great speed, and heavy guns would be formidable in coast defense. The cost of their construction will not be great, and they will require but a comparatively small expenditure to keep them in commission. In time of peace they will prove as effective as much larger vessels, and often more useful. One of them should be at every station where we maintain a squadron, and three or four should be constantly employed on our Atlantic and Pacific coasts. Economy, utility, and efficiency combine to recommend them as almost indispensable. Ten of these small vessels would be of incalculable advantage to the naval service, and the whole cost of their construction would not exceed two million three hundred thousand dollars, or \$230,000 each.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF INTERIOR.

The report of the Secretary of the Interior is worthy of grave consideration. It treats of the numerous, important, and diversified branches of domestic administration entrusted to him by law. Among these the most prominent are the public lands and our relations with the Indians.

PUBLIC LANDS.

Our system for the disposal of the public lands, originating with the fathers of the republic, has been improved as experience pointed the way, and gradually adapted to the growth and settlement of our western States and Territories. It has worked well in practice. Already thirteen States and seven Territories have been carved out of these lands, and still more than a thousand millions of acres remain unsold. What a boundless prospect this presents to our country of future prosperity and power.

We have heretofore disposed of 363,862,464 acres of the public land.

Whilst the public lands as a source of revenue are of great importance, their importance is far greater as furnishing homes for a hardy and independent race of honest and industrious citizens, who desire to subdue and cultivate the soil. They ought to be administered mainly with a view of promoting this wise and benevolent policy. In appropriating them for any other purpose, we ought to use even greater economy than if they had been converted into money and the proceeds were already in the public treasury. To squander away this richest and noblest inheritance which any people have ever enjoyed upon objects of doubtful constitutionality or expediency, would be to violate one of the most important trusts ever committed to any people. Whilst I do not deny to Congress the power, when acting *bona fide* as a proprietor, to give away portions of them for the purpose of increasing the value of the remainder, yet, considering the great temptation to abuse this power, we cannot be too cautious in this exercise.

Actual settlers under existing laws are protected against other purchasers at the public sales, in their right of pre-emption, to the extent of a

quarter section, or 160 acres of land. The remainder may then be disposed of at public, or entered at private sale in unlimited quantities.

Speculation has of late years prevailed to a great extent in the public lands. The consequence has been that large portions of them have become the property of individuals and companies, and thus the price is greatly enhanced to those who desire to purchase for actual settlement. In order to limit the area of speculation as much as possible, the extinction of the Indian title, and the extension of the public surveys ought only to keep pace with the tide of emigration.

If Congress should hereafter grant alternate sections to States or companies, as they have done heretofore, I recommend that the intermediate sections retained by the government should be subject to pre-emption by actual settlers.

It ought ever to be our cardinal policy to reserve the public lands as much as may be for actual settlers, and this at moderate prices. We shall thus not only best promote the prosperity of the new States and Territories, and the power of the Union, but shall secure homes for our posterity for many generations.

INDIAN TRIBES.

The extension of our limits has brought within our jurisdiction many additional and populous tribes of Indians, a large proportion of which are wild, untractable and difficult to control. Predatory and warlike in their disposition and habits, it is impossible altogether to restrain them from committing aggression on each other, as well as upon our frontier citizens and those emigrating to our distant States and Territories. Hence expensive military expeditions are frequently necessary to overawe and chastise the lawless and hostile.

The present system of making them valuable presents to influence them to remain at peace has proved ineffectual. It is believed to be the better policy to colonize them in suitable localities, where they can receive the rudiments of education and be gradually induced to adopt habits of industry. So far as the experiment has been tried it has worked well in practice and it will doubtless prove to be less expensive than the present system.

The whole number of Indians within our territorial limits is believed to be, from the best data in the Interior Department, about 325,000.

The tribes of Cherokees, Choctaws, Chickasaws and Creeks, settled in the territory set apart for them west of Arkansas, are rapidly advancing in education and in all the arts of civilization and self-government and we may indulge the agreeable anticipation that at no very distant day they will be incorporated into the Union as one of the sovereign States.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

It will be seen from the report of the Postmaster General that the Post Office Department still continues to depend on the treasury, as it has been compelled to do for several years past, for an important portion of the means of sustaining and extending its operations. Their rapid growth and expansion are shown by a decennial statement of the number of post offices and the length of post roads, commencing with the year 1827. In that year there were 7,000 post offices; in 1837, 11,177; in 1847, 15,146; and in 1857 they number 26,586. In this year 1,725 post offices have been established and 704 discontinued, leaving a net increase of 1,021. The postmasters of 368 offices are appointed by the President.

The length of post roads in 1827 was 105,336 miles; in 1837, 141,242 miles; in 1847, 153,818 miles; and in the year 1857 there are 242,601 miles of post road, including 22,530 miles of railroad, on which the mails are transported.

The expenditures of the department for the fiscal year ending on the 30th June, 1857, as adjusted by the Auditor, amounted to 11,507,670. To defray these expenditures there was to the credit of the department on the 1st of July, 1856, the sum of \$789,599; the gross revenue of the year, including the annual allowances for the transportation of free mail matter produced \$8,053,951; and the remainder was supplied by the appropriation from the treasury of \$2,250,000, granted by the act of Congress approved August 18, 1856, and by the appropriation of \$666,883 made by the act of March 3, 1857, leaving \$252,763 to be carried to the credit of the Department in the account of the current year. I commend to your consideration the report of the department in relation to the establishment of the overland mail route from the Mississippi river to San Francisco, California. The route was selected with my full concurrence, as the one, in my judgment, best calculated to attain the important objects contemplated by Congress.

ECONOMY RECOMMENDED.

The late disastrous monetary revulsion may have one good effect should it cause both the government and the people to return to the practice of a wise and judicious economy both in public and private expenditures.

An overflowing treasury has led to habits of prodigality and extravagance in our legislation. It has induced Congress to make large appropriations to objects for which they never would have provided had it been necessary to raise the amount of revenue required to meet them by increased taxation or by loans. We are now compelled to pause in our career, and scrutinize our expenditures with the utmost vigilance, and in performing this duty, I pledge my co-operation to the extent of my constitutional competency.

It ought to be observed at the same time that the public economy does not consist in withholding any means necessary to accomplish important national objects intrusted to us by the constitution, and especially such as may be necessary for the common defence. In the present crisis of the country it is our duty to confine our appropriations to objects of that character, unless in cases where justice to individuals may de-

mand a different course. In all cases care ought to be taken that the money granted by Congress shall be faithfully and economically applied.

MORE TIME ASKED TO REVIEW BILLS.

Under the federal constitution, 'every bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it becomes a law,' be approved and signed by the President; and, if not approved, he shall return it with his objections to that house in which it originated.' In order to perform this high and responsible duty, sufficient time must be allowed the President to read and examine every bill presented to him for approval. Unless this be afforded, the constitution becomes a dead letter in this particular; and even worse, it becomes a means of deception. Our constituents, seeing the President's approval and signature attached to each act of Congress, are induced to believe that he has actually performed his duty, when, in truth, nothing is, in many cases, more unfounded.

From the practice of Congress, such an examination of each bill as the constitution requires, has been rendered impossible. The most important business of each session is generally crowded into its last hours, and the alternative presented to the President is either to violate the constitutional duty which he owes to the people, and approve bills, which, for want of time, it is impossible he should have examined, or, by his refusal to do this, subject the country and individuals to great loss and inconvenience.

Besides, a practice has grown up of late years to legislate in appropriation bills, at the last hours of the session, on new and important subjects. This practice constrains the President, either to suffer measures to become laws which he does not approve, or to incur the risk of stopping the wheels of the government by vetoing an appropriation bill. Formerly, such bills were confined to specific appropriations for carrying into effect existing laws and the well-established policy of the country, and little time was then required by the President for their examination.

For my own part, I have deliberately determined that I shall approve no bill which I have not examined, and it will be a case of extreme and most urgent necessity which shall ever induce me to depart from this rule. I therefore respectfully, but earnestly, recommend that the two houses will allow the President at least two days previous to the adjournment of each session within which no new bill shall be presented to him for approval. Under the existing joint rule one day is allowed; but this rule has been hitherto so constantly suspended in practice, that important bills continue to be presented to him up till the very last moments of the session. In a large majority of cases no great public inconvenience can arise from the want of time to examine their provisions, because the constitution has declared that if a bill be presented to the President within the last ten days of the session he is not required to return it, either with an approval or with a veto, in which case it shall not be a law. It may then lie over, and be taken up and passed at the next session. Great inconvenience would only be experienced in appropriation bills; but fortunately, under the late excellent law allowing a salary, instead of a per diem, to members of Congress, the expense and inconvenience of a called session will be greatly reduced.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

I cannot conclude without commending to your favorable consideration the interests of the people of this District. Without a representative on the floor of Congress, they have for this very reason peculiar claims upon our just regard. To this I know, from my long acquaintance with them, they are eminently entitled.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON, December 8, 1857.

Capt. Van Vleet's Official Account of his Visit to Utah.

HAM'S FORK, Sept. 16, 1857.

CAPTAIN—I have the honor to report, for the information of the Commanding General, the result of my trip to the Territory of Utah.

In obedience to special instructions, dated Headquarters Army for Utah, Fort Leavenworth, July 28, 1857, I left Fort Leavenworth July 30, and reached Fort Kearney in nine traveling days, Fort Laramie in ten, and Great Salt Lake City in thirty-three and a half. At Fort Kearney I was detained one day by the changes I had to make and by sickness, and at Fort Laramie three days, as all the animals were forty miles from the post, and when brought in a had to be shod before they could take the road. I traveled as rapidly as it was possible to do with six mule wagons. Several of my teams broke down, and at least half of my animals are unserviceable, and will remain so until they recruit. During my progress towards Utah I met many people from that Territory, and also several mountain men at Green river, and all informed me that I would not be allowed to enter Utah, and if I did, I would run great risk of losing my life. I treated all this, however, as idle talk; but it induced me to leave my wagons and escort at Ham's Fork, 143 miles this side of the city, and proceed alone.

I reached Great Salt Lake City without molestation, and immediately upon my arrival I informed Gov. Brigham Young that I desired an interview, which he appointed for the next day. On the evening of the day of my arrival, Gov. Young, with many of the leading men of the city, called upon me at my quarters. The Governor received me most cordially, and treated me during my stay, which continued some six days, with the greatest hospitality and kindness. In this interview the Governor made known to me his views with regard to the approach of the United States troops in plain and unmistakeable language.

He stated that the Mormons had been persecuted, murdered and robbed in Missouri and Illinois, both by the mob and State authorities, and

that now the United States were about to pursue the same course, and that, therefore, he and the people of Utah had determined to resist all persecution at the commencement, and that the troops now on the march for Utah should not enter the Great Salt Lake Valley. As he uttered these words, all those present concurred most heartily in what he said. The next day, as agreed upon, I called upon the Governor and delivered in person the letters with which I had been entrusted.

In that interview, and in several subsequent ones, the same determination to resist to the death the entrance of the troops into the Valley was expressed by Governor Young and those about him. The Governor informed me that there was abundance of everything I required for the troops, such as lumber, forage, &c., but that none would be sold to us.

In the course of my conversation with the Governor and the influential men in the Territory, I told them plainly and frankly what I conceived would be the result of their present course. I told them that they might prevent the small military force now approaching Utah from getting through the narrow defiles and rugged passes of the mountains this year, but that next season the United States government would send troops sufficient to overcome all opposition. The answer to this was invariably the same, "We are aware that such will be the case, but when those troops arrive they will find Utah a desert, every house will be burned to the ground, every tree cut down, and every field laid waste. We have three years' provisions on hand, which we will 'cache' and then take to the mountains and bid defiance to all the powers of the government." I attended their service on Sunday, and in course of a sermon delivered by Elder Taylor, he referred to the approach of the troops and declared that they should not enter the Territory. He then referred to the probability of an overpowering force being sent against them, and desired all persons who would apply the torch to their own buildings, cut down their trees, and lay waste their fields, to hold up their hands; every hand in an audience numbering over 4,000 persons was raised at the same moment. During my stay in the city I visited several families, and all with whom I was thrown looked upon the present movement of the troops towards their Territory as the commencement of another religious persecution, and expressed a fixed determination to sustain Governor Young in any measures he might adopt.

From all these facts I am forced to the conclusion that Governor Young and the people of Utah will prevent, if possible, the army for Utah from entering their Territory this season. This, in my opinion, will not be a difficult task, owing to the lateness of the season, the smallness of our force, and the defenses that nature has thrown around the valley of the Great Salt Lake. There is but one road running into the valley on the side which our troops are approaching, and for over fifty miles it passes through narrow canyons and over rugged mountains, which a small force could hold against great odds. I am inclined, however, to believe that the Mormons will not resort to actual hostilities until the last moment. Their plan of operations will be to burn the grass, cut up the roads and stampede the animals, so as to delay the troops until snow commences to fall, which will render the road impassable. Snow falls early in this region; in fact, last night it commenced falling at Fort Bridger, and this morning the surrounding mountains are clothed in white. Were it one month earlier in the season I believe the troops could force their way in, and they may be able to do so even now; but the attempt will be fraught with considerable danger arising from the filling up of the canyons and passes with snow. I do not wish it to be considered that I am advocating either the one course or the other. I simply wish to lay the facts before the General, leaving it to his better judgment to decide upon the proper movements. Notwithstanding my inability to make the purchase I was ordered to, and all that Gov. Young said in regard to opposing the entrance of the troops into the valley, I examined the country in the vicinity of the city, with a view of selecting a proper military site. I visited the military reserve—Rush Valley—but found it, in my opinion, entirely unsuitable for a military station. It contains but little grass, and is very much exposed to the cold winds of winter, its only advantage being the close proximity of fine wood; it is too far from the city, being between forty and fifty miles, and will require teams four days to go there and return. I examined another point on the road to Rush Valley, and only about thirty miles from the city, which I consider a much more eligible position. It is in Tuelle Valley, three miles to the north of Tuelle City, and possesses wood, water, and grass, but is occupied by Mormons, who have some sixty acres under cultivation, with houses and barns on their land. These persons would have to be dispossessed, or bought out. In fact, there is no place within forty, fifty or sixty miles of the city, suitable for a military position, that is not occupied by the inhabitants and under cultivation. Finding that I could neither make the purchases ordered to, nor shake the apparent determination of the people to resist the authority of the United States, I left the city and returned to my camp on Ham's Fork. On my return I examined the vicinity of Fort Bridger, and found it a very suitable position for wintering the troops and grazing the animals, should it be necessary to stop at that point. The Mormons occupy the fort at present, and also have a settlement about ten miles further up Black's Fork, called Fort Supply. These two places contain buildings sufficient to cover nearly half the troops now en route for Utah, but I was informed that they would all be laid in ashes as the army advances. I have thus stated fully the result of my visit to Utah, and trusting that my conduct will meet the approval of the commanding General, I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

STEWART VAN VLIET,

Capt. A. Q. M., U. S. Army.

CAPT. A. PLEASANTON, A. Asst. Adj. Gen. Army for Utah, Fort Leavenworth.