Report of the Postmaster General

The Annual Report of the Postmaster General is a long and able document. It gives a clear idea of the vast extent of the Post Office operations of this country, suggests some important improvements, and abounds in useful statements.

It appears that an actual increase of 38.65 per cent. occurred during the past fiscal year in American Postages, while the apparent increase in American and foreign payments to the Department amounts to 16½ per cent. Or, in figures, the receipts from American and foreign Postages for the fiscal year, exceed those of the preceding year $909,223 85; but excluding the balances accruing to the *British* Post Office, in order to indicate the increase of our own postages, the amount reaches $997,610 79. During the last quarter of the fiscal year, a sensible reduction took place in domestic postage, attributable to the near approach of that period to the time fixed by the Act of March 3d, 1851, to establish cheaper rates of postage. A consequent delay in correspondence was a natural result. A similar reduction was observed upon the adoption of the reduced rates under the Act of 1845. The claims of the Franking privelege by certain members of the present Congress also contributed to this reduction.

The report contains a formidable array of figures relating to the business of the Department during the year; of which the important points are as follows, viz:

Number of Mail Routes,	6,320
Length of Mail Routes,	196,240
Number of Contractors employed,	1,644
Annual cost of transportation,	3 27,...
Annual cost of transportation,	$3,149,753
Miles of Railroad transportation,	8,206,...
Miles of steam boat transportation,	6,451,...
Number of Post-offices in operation,	18,...
Number of Post-offices in operation on the 1st of June, 1851,	18,518
Gross receipts of the Department,	$1,9...,484
Total Letter Postage,	$5,338,43
Newspaper, pamphlet, &c. postage	$...
Ordinary Revenue of the Post Office,	$2,...,928
Increase over that of last year,	$..,..,05
Expenditures of the year,	$..,..,422
Ordinary Expenses,	$..,4..,657

At the close of the half century, the Postmaster General deems it proper to refer to the origin, history and progress of the Post office Department. This portion of the report possesses a peculiar interest and value.

Within the last two years, the cost of Mail transportation has largely increased. New contracts of the North-western and South-western sections involved an increase of 25 per cent. in aggregate cost, and of 10.4 per cent. in service; while other contracts in the southern section, the extension and opening of the Erie Railroad, increased mail facilities on the routes leading from the Atlantic cities to important points in the west, and upon the western rivers, added to the placing of the two steamers, the *Franklin* and *Humboldt*, on the New York and Havre line, have all contributed to entail burdens on the revenues of the Department. The report refers, in this connection, to the subject of compensating Postmasters, and suggests the propriety of making liberal provision for this purpose.

The question of Cheap Postage is discussed at considerable length. The Postmaster General compares the results of the system in Great Britain with the reduced rates of the United States, and believes that we are admonished by the comparison not to attempt a further reduction, until it shall be justified by the revenue. He suggests that the rates of postage on all printed matter can be rendered more uniform and less complex by the adoption of suitable rates, without diminishing the revenue very materially.

The Special agents of the Department have been actively employed. Mr. Hobbie was despatched to Cuba and Panama, to effect suitable Mail arrangements for the West Indies, South America, and points on the Gulf of Mexico. These objects were temporarily attained, but the increase of correspondence will soon render more perfect arrangements desirable. It is recommended that adequate provision be made for the payment of Mr. Hobbie's expenses while he was absent upon this mission. As to California and Oregon, contracts have been executed for the residue of the contract term, to end on the 30th June, 1845. The report also refers to the opening of the route now in operation by way of Lake Nicaragua.

The contracts with the Cunard and Collins steamships; the subject of postal communication between the United States and Mexico, by a line of steamers running from New Orleans to Vera Cruz via Tampico; the conveyance of letters hither from foreign ports without delivery at the Post office; the necessity of guarding the mails from robbery, and the increasing abuses of the Franking Privilege—are severally dwelt upon, and recommendations are made, in relation thereto, which will attract attention.

Certain improvements in the organization of the Department are suggested; and the Report concludes with a thorough revision of the laws which affect the government of the General Post Office.

Report of the Secretary of War.

The Annual Report of the Secretary of War gives a summary view of the operations of the Army during the last year, and its present condition.

The protection of our south western frontier, and of the Mexican territory adjoining our own, against the incursions of hostile Indians, has engaged the attention of the Department. The savages act not so much by hostility to the whites as motives of plunder. The character of the country in which they live makes it exceedingly difficult to guard against their ravages, or pursue them to punishment. Congress having failed to provide a mounted regiment at its last session, as many troops adapted to the service required as could be spared from other quarters, were concentrated upon the frontier, to operate against the Indians.

The Indians of California and Oregon appearing unwarlike, and comparatively harmless, the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen was withdrawn from the Pacific and stationed in Texas. In the interval of several months between the death of Major Samuel Brooke, and the arrival of Brevet Major General Smith in Texas, the command of that Department devolved upon Brevet Brig. Gen. Harney, who displayed great and efficient activity in arresting the incursions of the Indians. With the double object of overawing the fierce tribes occupying the northern part of Texas, and of affording protection to emigrants, a chain of military posts was established on that frontier. In order to chastise and hold in check the Indians of New Mexico, who had become exceedingly bold and troublesome, Brevet Col. Summer was ordered to that Department, and set out in July last with a portion of his command on an expedition into the country of the Navajoes, a powerful tribe which had spread terror in Texas, New Mexico, and Sonora. The result of the expedition is not yet known. Experience has shown that the most effectual way to protect our frontier settlement is to overawe the Indians by a constant display of military force; for this reason, among others, the military stations in Texas and New Mexico have been removed as near as possible to the frontiers.

Thus the United States have endeavored to fulfil their treaty obligations with Mexico. It surely never was intended that we should incur the expense and responsibility of defending her territory from these invasions. The language of the Treaty admits of no such construction, and if it did it would be impossible to carry it out, as we have no right to station troops within her limits. All we can do is to make common cause with her, chastise the depredations when possible, and in treaties with them guard Mexican interests as well as our own. Our efforts will be fruitless however, unless Mexico co-operates with us, for our own military movements necessarily tend to drive the Indians towards the frontiers of that country. We have brave, impetuous, courageous frontiersmen to repel Indian invasion; our Mexican neighbors have nothing that deserves the name of militia, and little daring intrepidity. The difference in character undoubtedly tends to lead the savages to commit outrages upon Mexican territory. The feebleness of the Federal authority in Mexico also impairs her influence among the Indians, who know no right but power, nor motive other than fear of its exercise. With a view to protection of Sonora, as far as possible, a fort has been established at the junction of the Gila and Colorado. The pervading idea that the United States are bound to indemnify Mexican citizens for losses by the indians has undoubtedly led to gross exaggeration in accounts of the invasions.

The Indians west of the Rocky mountains are less warlike; but several outbreaks have occurred in California and Oregon. Treaties recently concluded if faithfully observed on our part, will probably prevent further trouble. It would not be safe, however, to rely entirely on any pacific policy for the protection of those remote regions. The entire military force on the Pacific is only 736 men, which is entirely inadequate. An increase of the rank and file of Infantry and the Artillery is recommended, as well as an additional regiment of Cavalry. The entire Army, forces is numbered at 10,538, which gives an effective force of 8,500.

The increase in the expense of supporting the Army is mentioned, and the causes are stated. The increase resulted from our newly acquired territory (including Texas) amounts to $4,556,767 75.

After an enumeration of measures adopted to curtail the expenses of the Army, the result is shown in a reduction of $1,161,492,75. Other contemplated reforms require the aid of legislation.

The enormous expense of maintaining a large portion of the regular Army on the frontier must continue, if the force is maintained. It is recommended with a view to reducing these expenditures, that the necessity for regular forces be diminished by encouraging the formation of a local militia in the frontier territories, by distributing arms among the inhabitants.

Both policy and humanity require that we should endeavor to stop Indian depredations by conciliatory measures, instead of the terror of our arms. Starvation, forced upon the savages by the advancement of the whites upon their hunting grounds, has frequently instigated their outrages. The U. S., as the owners of the public domain have always acted on the principles that the aboriginal race had the right of *occupancy* in the soil and have extinguished their claim to the land by purchase when required for use. Texas, on the contrary, as the owner of all the vacant land in her limits, acknowledges no such right, and has laid it off and proceeded to sell it at once—a course well calculated to alarm and exasperate the Indians, and to bring about collisions with the whites.

The condition of the West Point Academy, the National Armories, and the operations of the various Bureaux in the Department are severally alluded to and commended. An addition to the Commissary force is asked for.

A retired list of disabled Army officers is again urged upon the attention of Congress. The additional pay allowed by the Act of Sept., 1850, to the officers and soldiers stationed on the Pacific, is recommended to be continued.

Report of the Secretary of the Navy.

The Annual report from the Navy Department is a document of moderate length, considerable ability, and general interest. It contains sundry recommendations regarding the regulation of the Naval Establishment, and suggests a number of desirable improvements.

Six squadrons are employed in active service on the ocean. Of these the Home squadron, yet under the command of Commodore Parker, consists of five vessels, and has cruised in the West Indies and along the coasts of the Carribean Sea, The *Mediterranean* squadron, Com. Morgan commanding, consists of four vessels; the *African* squadron, lately under the command of Com. Gregory, now of Com. Lavelette, comprises five brigs and sloops; the squadron on the coast of *Brazil*, Com. McKeever, includes the flag-ship Congress and three others; the *Pacific* squadron, Com. McCauley, includes eleven seaworthy vessels and store ships; and the squadron for the *East Indies*, Com. Aulick, commanding, comprehends the steam frigate *Susquehannah* and three sloops of war. The total number of vessels employed in squadron service is therefore thirty-three. The Report announces with satisfaction that in all quarters of the globe the reception of American cruisers has been respectful and cordial. A complimentary allusion is made to the Expedition in search of Sir John Franklin, under the command of Lieut. De Haven; and the generous offer of the vessels, by Mr. Grinnell, for another cruise, is conveyed to Congress for its acceptance, should it be thought proper to authorize a second expedition. The voyage of the frigate *St. Lawrence* to Southampton is also noticed in appropriate terms.

The number of officers employed during the year in the Coast Survey was ninety. The secretary renews his recommendation that the supervision of this work be transferred to the Navy Department.

The necessity for a revision of the laws relating to the Navy, and the adoption of a suitable and efficient system of Naval policy, is recommended to the attention of Congress. Mr. Graham does not concur in the policy sometimes advocated that we should apportion our naval force to that of the principal nations of Europe with which we may possibly come in collision, yet he recommends that all the aids afforded by science and experience be applied to the improvement of our Naval establishment. It is in vain that we rest contented with old models and antiquated armaments. Our obvious policy is to continue to build ships, not only to supply losses, but to keep pace with the improvements of the age. The necessity of the establishment of a retired list, and the want of a class of small vessels to give employment in command to senior lieutenants, are two important recommendations of the report.

The question of Corporeal Punishment in the Navy, is commented upon by Secretary Graham at considerable length. A material defect in our Naval code is held to be that which is occasioned by the failure to provide any punishment by way of substitute. The Report goes on to argue that the abolition of Naval Flogging has been attended with unprofitable consequences; that justice is delayed by confinement; that honest men are made the servants of the unworthy, while the latter are in confinement; and the ship's effective force is weakened. The Secretary considers that the consequences of the change have thus far been detrimental to the service, and commends the subject to the consideration of Congress.

The scientific researches which have been presented during the year, under the direction of the Navy Department, are producing valuable results. The Navy Observatory and Hydrographical office have been in active and vigorous operation; the Wind and Current Charts planned by Lieut. Maury, are being extended to the Pacific and Indian Oceans; the Astronomical expedition to Chili, under the direction of Lieut. Gillis, has been actively conducted, and the first publication of the Nautical Almanac, under the superintendance of Lieut. Davis, may be expected in the course of the next fiscal year.

FOREIGN NEWS.

HIGHLY IMPORTANT FROM FRANCE.

THE CRISIS ARRIVED.

THE ASSEMALY DISSOLVED BY THE PRESIDENT—PARIS IN A STATE OF SIEGE.

HALIFAX, N. S., Dec. 20.

The steamship Europa from Liverpool, with dates to the 6th December, arrived this forenoon, having experienced a constant succession of heavy gales from the West. She lost a man overboard during the passage.

She brings intelligence of the arrival of the long dreaded crisis in France.

The steamship Canada arrived at Liverpool on the 2d instant after a rough and boisterous passage.

The steameship Baltic arrived at Liverpool on Thursday, the 2th inst.

THE CRISIS IN FRANCE.

The affairs of France have reached the long dreaded crisis. The *coup d'etat* has been made.

On the first inst, the President Lous Napoleon, seized the reins of Government, dissolved the Assembly by proclamation, declared the city of Paris in a stat of siege, arrested the leaders of the opposition, and appealed to the people.

The preparations on the part of the President's for this movement were perfected with consummate skill and secresy.—Every thing was consummated before the Assembly had the least idea of the President's intention.

During Monday night an entire new Ministry was formed.

At daylight on Thesday morning the President's proclamation was found posted everywhere throughout the city, in which he ordered the dispersion of the Assembly the restoration of universal suffrage, and also proposing a new system of Gvernment. He propses the instant election, by the people and army, of a President, to hold his office for ten years, and to be supported by a Council of State and two Houses of the Legislature. Pending the election, the Executive power is to remain in the hands of the President.

The election is to take place during the present month, and the President promices to bow to the will of the people. He says he has been forced into his present attitude.

It is certain that Thiers, Changarnier, and others of the opponents of the President, had decided to demand his arrest and impeachment on the 2d inst., and were almost in the act of moving in the matter, when they and their principal friends were arrested and conveyed to Vincennes, where they are closely confined.

Whenever the members of the Assembly have attempted to meet officially they have been ordered to disperse, and arrested if they refused.

Two hundred members had been arrested. Many had subsequently been released; but all the leaders of the opposition were in prison.

Three hundred of the members of the Assembly are said to have given in their adhesion to the President, and telegraphic despatches from the departments state that the President's demonstration has been hailed with the utmost enthusiasm.

Subsequently, however, these reports were contradicted, and on the strength of such contradiction, numerous barricades were erected in different quarters of Paris, but were speedily broken down by the troops. At one of them two members of the Assembly occupying prominent places among the populace, were killed in the conflict.

On Thuesday a section of the Assembly continued to meet, and decreed the deposition of the President, and his impeachment for high treason. The meeting, however, was dispersed by the troops.

The decree of the President is rediculed on all hands. Troops have been placed in the houses of ex-officers of the Assembly, who were exempted from arrest, among others M. Dupin.

The full rigor of martial law had been proclaimed against all person concerned in erecting barricades, or who may be found at them, and a large number had been shot.

Up to Thursday night the complete success of the President seemed certain.

The advices from London on Friday do not materially vary the prospect, but new elements were constantly arising.

Later from France.—Triumph of Napoleon.—Restoration of Tranquility.

We learn by telegraph that the steamship Baltic reached New York on the 23d instant with intelligence from Liverpool to the 10th instant.

The progress of events in France continued to absorb public attention throughout Europe. The President had proved completely successful in his *coup d'etat*, the various attempts at resistance in Paris having been promptly met and put down. In the departments the resistance to the movement is described as having been partial, and strictly limited to the extreme republicans, as in Paris, and had been as vigorously repressed.

It may be said, in the President's language, that France has accepted the situation. Although there has not been the enthusiasm in his behalf which he anticipated, there has been a tacit and almost universal acquiescence. Many opponents of Louis Napoleon preferred his plan to the supposed alternatives—anarchy or legitimacy. Few have been found to sympathize with the Assembly, or to deny that the President was forced by the intrigues of that body to choose betwen the surrender of power and office and the bold act of usurpation which he perpetrated Such, at least, is the statement received via London form France; though the fact that Louis Napoleon had obtained possession of the telegraphic channels of information justifies a good deal of caution in regard to the degree of confidence to be placed in it.

At the latest dates tranquility was pretty well restored in Paris. Indeed, within a few hours of the brief struggle alluded to in the advices by the Europa, upturn pavements and the shattered walls of houses were the only evidences of the insurrection.

The departments of Saone et Loire and Allier had been placed in a state of siege; but the disturbances that caused the act are represented to have been insignificant.—There, as every where, the troops were triumphant.

Tangier matters had been amicably arranged, and other towns in Morocco thus escaped bombardment by the Franch.

Since the Europa's departure the demand for cotton at Liverpool has sensibly declined—the sales to the evening of the 9th being 13,000 bales, of which 1,500 were on speculation and for export. Friday's prices were firmly maintained until the 9th, when the market took a turn in favor of buyers—a decline of 1-16 is quoted.

The Cambria arrived out on the 8th.

Additional News

Subsequent despatches put us in possession of further details brought by the Baltic.

Telegraphic information from London received at Liverpool just previous to the sailing of the steamer, states that the Prince de Joinville and the Duke D'Aumale, sons of the late King, had gone to Belgium to raise the standard of revolt against the military usurpations of Louis Napoleon.

Commodore Ap Catesby Jones was among those wounded on the Boulevards; he lost a finger, had a leg broken, and was otherwise disabled. The loss on the part of the amry, in the course of the Paris engagements, is set down at one superiror officer and fifteen soldiers killed, and three officers and a hundred and forty soldiers wounded.

M. Thiers has been liberated by the President in consequence of ill health, on the condition that he leave the country.

☞ In our foregoing colums will be found abstracts of several Reports from the heads of Departments at Washington. They contain much interesting information.

JUDGE GRIER'S DEFINITION OF TREASON.

Judge GRIER has most completely demolished the numerous newspaper treatises on the law of treason, which the Christiana affair brought forth—in his recent charge in the case of HANAWAY. We do not deem it necessary to publish it entire, inasmuch as it would be to the exclusion of all the usual variety in our columns; but we make the subjoined extracts, which contain a concise exposition of the general principles laid down by the Judge:—*Crawford Dem.*

The resistance of the execution of a law of the United States, accompanied with any degree of force, if for a *private purpose*, is not treason. To constitute that offence the object of the resistance must be of a public and general nature.

The jury will observe that the "levying of war," against the United States is not necessarily to be judged of alone by the number or array of troops. But there must be a conspiracy to resist by force, and actual resistance by force of arms or intimidation of numbers. This conspiracy and the insurrection connected with it must be, to effect something of a *public nature*, to overthrow the government, or to nullify some law of the United States, and totally to hinder its execution, or compel its repeal.

A band of smugglers may be said to set the law at defiance and to have conspired together for that purpose, and to resist, by armed force, the execution of the revenue laws; they may have battles with the officers of the revenue, in which numbers may be slain on both sides, & yet they will not be guilty of treason, because it is not an insurrecton of a public nature, but merely for private lucre or advantage.

A whole neighborhood of debtors may conspire together to resist the Sheriff and his officers in executing process on their property—they may perpetrate their resistance by force of arms; may kill the officer and his assistants—and yet they will not be liable only as felons, and not as traitors.—The insurrection is of a private, not of a public nature; their object is to hinder or remedy a private; not a public grievance.

A number of fugitive slaves may infest a neighborhood, and may be encouraged by the neighbors in combining to resist the capture of any of their number; they may resist with force and arms their master or the public officer, who may come to arrest them; they may murder and rob them; they are guilty of felony and liable to punishment, but not as traitors. Their insurrection is for a private object and connected with no public purpose.

It is true that constructively they may be said to resist the execution of the fugitive slave laws, but in no other sense than the smugglers resist the revenue laws, and the antirenters the executive laws. Their insurrection, their violence, however great their number may be, so long as it is merely to attain some personal or private end of their own, cannot be called *laying war*. Alexander the Great may be classed with robbery. One is public and national, the others private and personal.

Without desiring to invade the prerogatives of the jury in judging the facts of this case, the court feels bound to say, that they do not think the transaction with which the prisoner is charged with being connected, rises to the dignity of treason or a levying of war; not because the numbers or force was insufficient; but, first, for want of any proofs of previous conspiracy to make a *general and public resistance to any law* of the United States.

This insult upon the laws of the country deserves, and I presume will receive, condign punishment on the persons who shall be proved to be guilty participators in it.—But the riot and murder are offences against the State government.

ORPHANS' COURT SALE OF VALUARLE

Real Estate.

Clearfield County, ss:

WHEREAS, at an Orphans' Court held at Clearfield, in and for the county of Clearfield, on the 4th day of December, 1851, before Honorable ROBERT G. WHITE, President and RICHARD SHAW and JOHN P. HOY, Associate Judges of said Court, on the petition of A. W. ANDREWS, Administrator of all and singular the goods and chattels, rights and credits, which were of THOMAS WILKINS, late of the Borough of Clearville, in the county of Allegheny and State of Pennsylvania, deceased, at the time of his death, who died intestate, setting forth that said intestate died seized in his demesne of fee, of, in and to the undivided half part of the following described piece of and being and lying in the township of Bradley in said Clearfield county, and bounded by land of Peter Hand of Fox on the north, and by land of Fox on the east, with a CABIN HOUSE and STABLE thereon, with about TWO acres cleared on the same, containing TWO HUNDRED ACRES. Also, setting forth that said Administrator did, on the 8th day of September, A. D. 1851 by petition represent to the court that the personal property of said intestate was insufficient for the payment of his debts, as appeared by the accounts by him therefore produced, and setting forth that said intestate died seized in his demesne of fee of, in and to the one undivided half part of the above described land lying and being in said Clearfield county,—WHEREUPON the Honorable JOSEPH BURLINGTON, President and J. B. EVANS and R. P. CARR, his Associates, then and there composing an Orphans' Court in and for the said county of Clearfield, the said Court did

Order and Decree

That the sum of ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS be raised from the sale of the land mentioned in said petition.

THEREFORE, Therefore, decree a sale of said land in pursuance of said petition; which to take place on the TWENTY-FIRTH DAY OF JANUARY, A. D. 1852, on the premises.

TERMS—One-Third of the purchase money in hand, and One-Third in every SIX MONTHS thereafter until paid, with interest, to be secured by judgment bonds.

By the Court. WM. PORTER, Clerk.