

liable to no postage by law, or to very low rates of postage compared with that charged on letters; and to the great cost of mail service on railroads and by ocean steamers. The suggestions of the Postmaster General on the subject deserve the consideration of Congress.

INTERIOR.

The report of the **SECRETARY of the Interior** will engage your attention, as well for useful suggestions it contains, as for the interest and importance of the subjects to which they refer.

The aggregate amount of public land sold during the last fiscal year, located with military grants or land warrants, taken up under grant or roads, and selected as swamp lands by states, is twenty-four million, five hundred and fifty-seven thousand, four hundred and nine acres; of which the portion sold was fifteen million, seven hundred and twenty-nine thousand, five hundred and twenty-four acres, yielding in receipts the sum of eleven million, four hundred and eighty-five thousand, three hundred and eighty dollars. In the same period of time, eight million seven hundred and twenty-three thousand, eight hundred and fifty-four acres have been surveyed; but, in consideration of the quantity already subject to entry on additional tracts have been brought into market.

The peculiar relation of the general government to the District of Columbia renders it proper to recommend to your care not only its material, but also its moral interests, including education, more especially in those parts of the district outside of the cities of Washington and Georgetown.

The commissioners appointed to revise and codify the laws of the district, have made such progress in the performance of their task as to insure its completion within the time prescribed by the act of Congress.

Information has recently been received, that the peace of the settlements in the Territories of Oregon and Washington is disturbed by hostilities on the part of the Indians, with indications of extensive combinations of a hostile character among the tribes in that quarter, the more serious in their possible effect by reason of the undetermined foreign interests existing in those Territories, to which your attention has already been especially invited.

Efficient measures have been taken, which, it is believed, will restore quiet, and afford protection to our citizens.

In the Territory of **Kansas**, there have been acts prejudicial to good order, but as yet none have occurred under circumstances to justify the interposition of the federal executive. That could only be in case of obstruction to federal law, or of organized resistance to territorial law, assuming the character of insurrection, which, if it should occur, it would be my duty promptly to overcome and suppress. I cherish the hope, however, that the occurrence of any such untoward event will be prevented by the sound sense of the people of the Territory, who, by its organic law, possessing the right to determine their own domestic institutions, are entitled, while deporting themselves peacefully, to the free exercise of that right, and must be protected in the enjoyment of it, without interference on the part of the citizens of any of the States.

The Southern boundary line of this Territory has never been surveyed and established. The rapidly extending settlements in that region, and the fact that the main route between Independence, in the State of Missouri, and New Mexico, is contiguous to this line, suggest the probability that embarrassing questions of jurisdiction may consequently arise. For these and other considerations, I commend the subject to your early attention.

I have thus passed in review the general state of the Union, including such particular concerns of the federal government, whether of domestic or foreign relation, as it appeared to me desirable and useful to bring to the especial notice of Congress. Unlike the great States of Europe and Asia, and many of those of America, these United States are wasting their strength neither in foreign war nor domestic strife. Whatever of discontent or unhappiness may be felt, it is not of a kind to

disaffection exists, is attributable to the imperfections of human nature, or to incidentally governments, however perfect, which human wisdom can devise. Such subjects of political agitation as occupy the public mind, consists, to a great extent, of exaggeration of methods, or of over zeal in social improvement, or mere imagination of grievance, having no remote connection with any of the constitutional functions or duties of the federal government. To whatever extent these questions exhibit a tendency menacing to the stability of the constitution, or the integrity of the Union, and no farther, they demand the consideration of the Executive, and require to be presented by him to Congress.

Before the Thirteen Colonies became a confederation of independent States, they were associated only by community of transatlantic origin, by geographical position, and by the natural tie of common dependence on Great Britain. When that tie was sundered, they actually assumed the powers and rights of almost self-government. The municipal and social institutions of each, its laws of property and of personal relation—even in political organization—were such only as each one chose to establish, wholly without interference by any other. In the language of the Declaration of Independence, each State had the power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do so with other acts and things which independent States may of right do." The several colonies differed in climate, in soil, in natural production, in religion, in systems of education, in government, and in the forms of political administration; and they continued to differ in these respects when they voluntarily allied themselves as States to carry on the war of the Revolution.

The object of that war was to disenfranchise the United Colonies from foreign rule, which appeared to be oppressive, and to separate them permanently from the mother country; the principal result was the foundation of a republic of the free white men of the colonies, constituted, as they were, in distinct and especially independent State governments. As for the subject races, whether Indian or African, the wise and brave statesmen of that day being engaged in no extravagant scheme of social change, left them as they were, and thus preserved themselves and their country from the anarchy and the ever recurring wars which have prevailed in other non-civilized European colonies of America. When the confederated States found it convenient to modify the conditions of their association, by giving to the general government more success, in some respects, to the people of the States, instead of confining it to action in the States as such, they proceed to frame a new constitution, adhering steadily to the same thought, which was, to delegate legislative power as was necessary and proper