THE PRESS,
PUBLISHED DAILY, (SUNDAYS EXCEPTED,)
BY JOHN W. FORNEY.
OFFICE, No. 417 CHESNUT STREET,

DAILY PRESS.

TWELVE CENTS PER WEEK, payable to the carriers. Mailed to Subscribers out of the City, at SIX DOLLARS PER ANNUM; FOUR DOLLARS FOR EIGHT MONTHS; THREE DOLLARS FOR SIX MONTHS, invariably in advance for the time ordered.

THE WEEKLY PRESS,

Mailed to Subscribers out of the City, at THREE DOLLARS PER ANNUM, in advance.

WEEKLY PRESS.

WEEKLY PRESS will be sent to Subscribers by mail, (per annum, in advance,) at..... $2 00
Three Copies, " " 5 00
Five Copies, " " 8 00
Ten Copies, " " 12 00
Twenty Copies, " " (to one address)..... 20 00
Twenty Copies, or over, " (to address of each subscriber), each..... 1 20

For a Club of Twenty-one or over, we will send an extra copy to the getter-up of the Club.

☞ Postmasters are requested to act as Agents for THE WEEKLY PRESS.

THE WEEKLY PRESS.
THE CHEAPEST AND BEST
WEEKLY NEWSPAPER IN THE COUNTRY.

GREAT INDUCEMENTS TO CLUBS!

THE WEEKLY PRESS is published from the City of Philadelphia, every Saturday.

It is conducted upon National principles, and will uphold the rights of the States. It will resist fanaticism in every shape; and will be devoted to conservative doctrines, as the true foundation of public prosperity and social order. Such a Weekly Journal has long been desired in the United States, and it is to gratify this want that THE WEEKLY PRESS is published.

THE WEEKLY PRESS is printed on excellent white paper, clear, new type, and in quarto form, for binding. It contains all the News of the day; Correspondence from the Old World and the New; Domestic Intelligence; Reports of the various Markets; Literary Reviews; Miscellaneous Selections; the progress of Agriculture in all its various departments, &c., &c.

☞ *Terms, invariably in advance.*

THE WEEKLY PRESS will be sent to subscribers, by mail, at - - - - $2 00 per annum.
Twenty Copies, when sent to one address, 20 00 "
Twenty Copies, or over, to address of each subscriber, each, - - - 1 20 "

For a club of Twenty-one or over, we will send an extra copy to the getter-up of the Club.

Post Masters are requested to act as Agents for THE WEEKLY PRESS.

It will serve to a great favorite among political and personal friends, and all others who desire a first class Weekly Newspaper, will exert themselves to give THE WEEKLY PRESS a large circulation in their respective neighborhoods.

JOHN W. FORNEY,
Editor and Proprietor.

Publication Office of THE WEEKLY PRESS, No. 417 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

Gats.

WARBURTON'S INIMITABLE COVERS FOR THE HEAD,
Embrace all the points necessary to
GENTEEL EFFECT
in all the details and the elegancies which impart
FINISH, COMFORT, AND DURABILITY.
Gentlemen are invited to call and examine.
oct25-dm 430 CHESTNUT Street.

Books.

ORIGINAL EDITION OF CHARLES KNIGHT'S PICTORIAL SHAKSPEARE—including the Doubtful Plays and Biography, and illustrated with very numerous Engravings on Wood, in the highest style of art; forming 8 vols., Imperial 8vo.

The subscribers have been enabled to secure three copies of this magnificent edition of Shakspeare, which has long been exceedingly scarce. Immediate application will be necessary to prevent disappointment in procuring copies. C. J. PRICE & CO.,
Importers of English Books,
oct-y. No. 33 South Sixth St., above Chestnut.

VALUABLE LIBRARY BOOKS—
PUBLISHED BY
J. S. REDFIELD,
124 BEEKMAN STREET, NEW YORK.
SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

SKETCHES OF THE IRISH BAR. By the Right Hon. Richard Lalor Sheil; M. P. Edited, with a Memoir and Notes, by R. Shelton Mackenzie, D. C. L. Sixth Edition, with Portrait and fac-simile letter. In 2 vols 12mo. Price $2.

THE NOCTES AMBROSIANÆ. By Professor Wilson, J. G. Lockhart, James Hogg, and Dr. Maginn. Edited, with Memoirs and Notes, by Dr. R. Shelton Mackenzie. Third Edition. In 4 volumes, with portraits and fac-similes. Price $5.

MAGINN'S MISCELLANIES. The Miscellaneous Writings of the late Dr. Maginn. Edited, with a Memoir and Notes, by Dr. R. Shelton Mackenzie. Complete in 5 volumes, with Portrait. Price, per vol., cloth, $1.

LIFE OF THE RT. HON. JOHN PHILPOT CURRAN. By his Son, Wm. Henry Curran; with Notes and Additions, by Dr. R. Shelton Mackenzie. Portraits of Curran, and fac-simile letter. Third Edition. 12mo., cloth. Price $1 25.

THE O'BRIENS AND THE O'FLAHERTIES; a National Story, being the first of Lady Morgan's Novels and Romances. With an Introduction and Notes, by Dr. R. Shelton Mackenzie. 2 vols., 12mo., cloth. Price $2.

BARRINGTON'S SKETCHES. Personal Sketches of his Own Time. By Sir Jonah Barrington, with Illustrations by Darley. Fourth Edition. With Memoir by Dr. Mackenzie. 12mo., cloth. Price $1.25.

MOORE'S LIFE OF SHERIDAN. Memoirs of the Life of the Right Hon. Richard Brinsley Sheridan. By Thomas Moore; with Portrait and fac-simile. Sixth Edition. 2 vols., 12mo., cloth. Price $2.

BITS OF BLARNEY. By Dr. R. Shelton Mackenzie. Third Edition. 12mo., cloth. Price $1.

THE HISTORY OF THE WAR IN THE PENINSULA. By Major General Sir W. F. P. Napier, from the author's last revised edition, with fifty-five Maps and Plans, five Portraits on Steel, and a complete Index, 5 vols., 12mo, cloth. Price $7 50.

APIEW'S PENINSULAR WAR. Complete in 1 vol., 8vo. Price $2 50.

THE FOREST. By J. V. Huntington, author of "Lady Alice," "Alban," &c. 12mo. Second Edition. Price $1 25.

ALBAN; or, The History of a Young Puritan. By J. V. Huntington. 2 vols., 12mo., cloth. Price $2.
oct-4f

JOHN CAMPBELL & SON, BIBLIOPOLISTS, in the CUSTOM HOUSE Avenue, have always for sale rare and scarce Books. Gentlemen bookworms are invited to call and judge as to prices and variety. Also, miscellaneous books purchased in small or large quantities. Books continually receiving from auction. so24-th to 3m*

Watches, Jewelry, &c.

BAILEY & CO., CHESTNUT STREET.
Manufacturers and Importers of
BRITISH STERLING SILVER WARE,
Under their inspection, on the premises exclusively
Citizens and Strangers are invited to visit our manufactory.

WATCHES.

Constantly on hand a splendid stock of Superior Watches, of all the celebrated makers.

DIAMONDS.

Necklaces, Bracelets, Brooches, Ear-Rings, Finger-Rings, and all other articles in the Diamond line. Drawings of NEW DESIGNS will be made free of charge for those wishing work made to order.

RICH GOLD JEWELRY.

A beautiful assortment of all the new styles of Fine Jewelry, such as Mosaic, Stone and Shell Cameo, Pearl, Coral, Carbuncle, Marquisite, Lava, &c., &c.

SHEFFIELD CASTORS, BASKETS, WAITERS, &c.
Also, Bronze and Marble CLOCKS, of newest styles, and of superior quality. sul-4twswly

C. & A. PEQUIGNOT,
MANUFACTURERS OF WATCH CASES
AND IMPORTERS OF WATCHES,
121 SOUTH THIRD STREET, BELOW CHESTNUT,
PHILADELPHIA.
CONSTANT PEQUIGNOT. AUGUSTE PEQUIGNOT.
se19-3m*m

FINE WATCHES.

A full supply of all the celebrated London and Geneva Watches constantly on hand.

We sell the *Genuine Frodsham Watch at Twenty-five Dollars less* than the agency price, as established at Boston.

Boston Agency price is 250, 275, 300 dollars.
Bailey & Co's price is 225, 250, 275 dollars.
BAILEY & CO.
no28-stuth4w 428 CHESTNUT St.

JAMES E. CALDWELL & CO.,
No. 432 CHESTNUT, BELOW FIFTH STREET,
Importers of Watches and Fine Jewelry, Manufacturers of Sterling and Standard Silver Tea Sets, Forks and Spoons, sole agents for the sale of Charles Frodsham's new series Gold Medal London Timekeepers—all the sizes on hand, prices $250, $275 and $300.
English and Swiss Watches at the lowest prices.
Rich fashionable Jewelry.
Sheffield and American Plated Wares.
se5-y.

J. S. JARDEN & BRO.
MANUFACTURERS AND IMPORTERS OF
SILVER-PLATED WARE,
No. 804 Chestnut Street, above Third, (up stairs,) Philadelphia.
Constantly on hand, and for sale to the Trade,
TEA SETS, COMMUNION SERVICE SETS, URNS, PITCHERS, GOBLETS, CUPS, WAITERS, BASKETS, CASTORS, KNIVES, SPOONS, FORKS, LADLES, &c., &c.
Gilding and plating on all kinds of metal. se2-ly

SILVER WARE.—
WILLIAM WILSON & SON,
MANUFACTURERS OF SILVER WARE,
(ESTABLISHED 1812,)
S. W. CORNER FOURTH AND SANSOM STREETS.
A large assortment of SILVER WARE, of every description, constantly on hand, or made to order to match any pattern desired.
Importers of Sheffield and Birmingham Imported Ware. se30-d&wly

Political.

FOR REGISTER OF WILLS—
WM. HANCOCKS,
TWELFTH WARD,
Subject to Democratic Rules.
62-3m*

FOR SHERIFF—
CALEB S. WRIGHT,
FIFTH WARD.
Subject to Democratic rules no17-1m*

FOR SHERIFF—
ALDERMAN GEORGE MOORE,
FOURTH WARD.
Subject to Democratic Rules. no7-8m*

FOR SHERIFF—
JAMES G. GIBSON,
TWENTY-SECOND WARD.
Subject to Democratic Rules. no6-8m*

FOR SHERIFF,
EDWARD T. MOTT,
TWELFTH WARD
SUBJECT TO DEMOCRATIC RULES. oct6-2m*

For Sale and To Let.

DESIRABLE OFFICES at 520 WALNUT St., opposite the State House; one of the best business locations in Philadelphia, with heat, light, and all modern conveniences. Apply on the premises, Room No. 2, to G. W. J. BALL, Agent. no26

FOR SALE.—The four-story GRANITE BUILDING, on the north side of CHESTNUT Street, west of Fourth, intended for the Pennsylvania Bank, and now nearly finished. If not sold prior to January 1st, the Banking Room, and other parts of the building, will be rented separately, or together.
Apply to THOMAS CRAVEN,
dc6-stuth3t No. 8 MINOR Street.

WM. D. ROGERS, CARRIAGE REPOSITORY, 1,009 and 1,011 CHESTNUT St., above Tenth, is now open for the sale of every description of Carriages, combining style, durability, and elegance of finish, from the Manufactory, at the corner of SIXTH and MASTER Streets, to which the attention of citizens and Southern and Western gentlemen is respectfully called.

N.B.—Special attention given to carriages for repairs, in the shops connected with the Repository. Entrance on Chestnut street. oct7-3m & 1k-2m

The Press.

VOL. I—NO. 112. PHILADELPHIA, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1857. TWO CENTS.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Correspondents for "THE PRESS" will please bear in mind the following rules:

Every communication must be accompanied by the name of the writer. In order to insure correctness of the typography, but one side of a sheet should be written upon.

We shall be greatly obliged to gentlemen in Pennsylvania and other States for contributions giving the current news of the day in their particular localities, the resources of the surrounding country, the increase of population, and any information that will be interesting to the general reader

The Press.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1857.

THE POST OFFICE.

It ought to be generally known that all letters, to be mailed out of this city, which are dropped into the receiving-boxes of the sub or district post offices, recently established here, are conveyed to the chief office, without any charge whatever. The only requirement is that each letter shall have a stamp upon it—the rule of pre-payment being imperative, as regards *all* mailed letters. Persons who reside in distant parts of the city may be spared a long journey, for the purpose of posting a letter, by thus using the district offices in their respective neighborhoods.

A correspondent draws our attention to the fact that a great difference exists between posting letters in the Government boxes, and in those of private individuals:

"No man, who uses either a private despatch company, or the Government sub-offices, knows when he may not be called upon to *prove* the receipt of the letter by the party to whom it is addressed. Now, when you use the Government mails, if you prove that you put a letter into the post office, addressed to *A, it is presumed by law that A gets it*; but if you use a private company despatch you must prove the actual receipt of the letter—a thing impossible to do in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred. In all cases where *notice* and *proof of notice are* required, it is absolutely necessary to use the Government post."

This is very true, and should be remembered. But, as we have had occasion previously to observe, while a public post office charges *two* cents for postage and delivery of a letter, and a private office charges only *one*, a great number of persons will naturally use the latter. Let the Postmaster General be empowered to reduce the rate on city or "dropped" letters, and then the Government conveyance will distance all competition.

Philadelphia, New York, and Boston are the only cities in which, as yet, arrangements have been made for carrying out the letter-carrier system to its full extent. In the report of the Postmaster General, just laid before Congress, the two-cent point is touched upon, thus:

"With the view to facilitate the receipt and delivery of letters in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, the postmasters in these cities have been instructed to make improvements in their letter-carrier system to the full extent authorized by law. In New York it is found that nearly everything had been done that could be accomplished under existing laws, except the transmission of drop letters direct to their address without going into the main office, which is now done. On all letters through the mail the carriers receive two cents each for delivery, and on drop letters one cent. I had hoped to be able to reduce the delivery fee to the uniform price of one cent; but this was found impracticable in New York and Philadelphia, inasmuch as *the law requires that the entire cost of delivery shall be defrayed out of the carriers' receipts.* In Boston, where all the districts are comparatively densely populated, one cent a letter is made to pay. The postage on drop letters, including the carrier's fee, is now two cents; and upon the improved plan now adopted for their delivery direct from the main office, or the nearest station, as the case may be, it is fully believed that the public convenience will be fully subserved. In each of these cities there are to be from four to six deliveries a day, and the letters for mailing, &c., are to be collected and disposed of as frequently as the occasion may require. I do not feel at liberty to advise the free delivery of letters by carriers; but I would recommend a modification of the present law, so as to give the Postmaster General authority to have the delivery made at one cent a letter, in those cities, and under such rules as he may deem expedient and proper, *whenever the carriers' receipts are sufficient to meet expenses or not.* If the improved system is found to work satisfactorily in the three cities above mentioned, it is my purpose to extend it to all the other principal cities in the United States."

The Postmaster General evidently has got the right idea. The recommendation that the delivery of letters shall be reduced one-half—from *two* cents to *one*—"whether the carriers' receipts are sufficient to meet expenses or not," admits the whole principle upon which the penny postage was originally based in Europe. If the Post Office can be made to *pay*, well and good; but it is bad policy to go on the starvation system, in a public institution of so much importance as it really is. ROWLAND HILL, whose penny-postage system was so willingly adopted in England, in 1840, announced that, for a considerable period, the expenditure of the establishment must greatly exceed its gross receipts. Much earlier than was anticipated, the augmentation of letter-writing caused the department to be remunerative, and now the net income of the Post Office is an important item in the public revenue of England.

From various causes, among which may prominently figure our vast extent of territory, and the expense of having post offices in all parts of it with the cost of transmitting the mails, the cheap postage system does not contribute anything *directly* to the national revenue. But we are not without hopes of a different result before long. One obstacle, hitherto, has been the anomaly of conveying a letter thousands of miles for *three* cents, and then levying a tax of two cents additional for its local delivery by the letter-carrier. As in England, the postage stamp ought to free it *in toto*, putting it into the hands of the person to whom it is addressed, without any further charge.

The great extent to which communication by the Electric Telegraph is carried on, may be assumed as another reason why the number of letters sent through our Post Offices is disproportionably less than the number sent from about an equal amount of population in Great Britain and Ireland. We are a fast people. We do not like to be kept in suspense. We desire an immediate response to an inquiry, and are willing to pay extra for having it, through the Telegraph.

Lastly, when penny postage was commenced in England, the privilege of franking was wholly abolished. At this moment, even Queen VICTORIA'S correspondence is carried on entirely with postage-stamps. About twelve hundred persons, constituting the members of the Government, of the Departments, and of both Houses of Parliament, were deprived at "one fell swoop" of their privilege of sending and receiving letters free of postage. In the Government departments there was no restriction as to the weight or number of official letters thus sent and received. At present, each department pays the full charge of the Post Office, and an important item in the Post Office revenue this makes. As for members of the Legislature, about 1,100 of whom had the right, each of them daily to receive ten, and to despatch fifteen letters, each under one ounce in weight, the Penny Postage system annihilated their exclusive privilege, at once and for ever, and the Post Office revenue has very greatly received the benefit of the change. There actually is not any one, public or private person, in England, from the Queen down, who is exempt from paying postage.

These are points, to which our own Post Office authorities may turn their attention. In the mean time, we cheerfully recognise the practical good sense of the Report of the Postmaster General.

Later from Yucatan—Capture of Sisal by the Revolutionists.

[From the N. O. Picayune, of Dec. 2.]

The Mexican schooner Eduardo, Capt. Laferla, at this port from Tobasco, via Vera Cruz, reports having been spoken on the 18th ult., latitude 25 degrees North, by the Campeachy armed schooner Corinna, with three weeks' later intelligence from the Yucatan coast, and the progress of the political war in the interior.

The news is of great interest and importance.

Sisal has been bombarded and captured by the armed vessel sent out from Campeachy, and was now in the hands of the revolutionists. No particulars are given, nor have we further intelligence of the distracted condition of things at the capital.

Campeachy yet held out, but was still, on the 18th, sore beseiged by the government troops, under command of Col. Cepeda. During the whole of that day until midnight, heavy cannonading was heard both from the forts of the town and the works of the besiegers.

Captain Laferla also reports having spoken, on the 19th, Mexican schooner Arrogante, from this port, bound to Campeachy. All well.

Dr. Stone, the sculptor, has finished the nude figure of his statue of John Hancock, ordered by Congress, and is now "draping it," having the actual habiliments of the illustrious Boston merchant to model from. The statue is about seven feet high, and represents the first President of Congress, when, after the Declaration had been signed, he urged a unity of action, saying: "We must all hang together." It was then that Franklin added, *sotto voce*, "or be hung together."

The Legislature of Virginia met on Monday, when Governor Wise sent in three messages, which fill *twenty-three* columns of the Richmond *Enquirer*.

REPORT OF THE
SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
December 3, 1857.

SIR: In presenting an exhibit of the operations of this department, attention is first invited to the important and diversified interests connected with the administration of the public domain, respecting which the accompanying report of the Commissioner of the General Land Office furnishes interesting details, with a gratifying view of our extended land system. American legislation has shown its superior practical wisdom by its simplicity and adaptation to the wants of our people and its code of land laws, in regard to the improvement of which few suggestions can be made.

The leading fact attracting our attention is the vast extent of the operations of the Land Bureau.

The public domain covers a surface, exclusive of water, of one thousand four hundred and fifty million of acres. It stretches across the continent, and embraces every variety of climate and soil, abounding in agricultural, mineral, and timber wealth, everywhere inviting to enterprise, and capable of yielding support to man.

This great inheritance was acquired, first, by the voluntary cessions of several of the original thirteen States; then by the Louisiana purchase obtained from Napoleon by the treaty of 1803. The next enlargement of our territory was effected by the treaty of 1819 with Spain, ceding the Floridas to the United States; then its further extension was effected by the treaty of 1848, at Guadalupe Hidalgo, with Mexico, ceding New Mexico and California. Subsequently, Texas accepted the proposition of this Government establishing her boundaries, for the "relinquishment by the said State of her territory claimed by her exterior to said boundaries." It has been ascertained that the domain is that, in 1854, from Mexico, known as the "Gadsden purchase," covering a surface of 23,161,000 acres south of the Gila river.

The Supreme Court has said, in reference to acquired lands, that "the people change their sovereign, their rights to the property remain unaltered by this change." Consequently, when the United States succeeded to the ownership of that portion of our territory derived from treaties with foreign powers, the rights and paramount duty in the disposal of the public lands was to separate private from public property.

In obedience to this well-settled principle of public law, and under the special obligations of treaties, the United States have established boards of commissioners, conferred powers on registers and receivers, opened the way for judicial tribunals, and for the adjudication of foreign titles, and in multitudes of cases confirmed such titles by special acts of legislation.

These classes of titles are known under the generic description of "private land claims." and are of every species, from minute paces in the form of lots in Spanish towns to rural claims, ranging in size from one hundred arpents and less to a million and a half of acres.

These titles are of British, French, Spanish, and Mexican origin, all depending for validity on the colonial laws of their different sovereignties. And there is no branch of jurisprudence where greater research and extent of legal erudition have been displayed by our judicial tribunals than in the determination of the intricate questions which have arisen, been discussed, and judicially determined in connection with this branch of the service. These foreign claims are of every diversity of shape, and everywhere scattered over the public domain, interrupting the regularity of our surveys, the small claims generally bordering on the rivers, exhibit in striking contrast the irregularities of the foreign surveys, when compared with the simplicity and beauty of our own rectangular system; showing the difference in the modes of distributing estates, one of which is conceded to the favorites of princes immense bodies of the choicest lands, whilst the other subdivides the public territory so as to deal with every citizen in a spirit of enlarged liberality. In the growth of our immense territory, in the way and by the means already mentioned, there remained and still remain unadjudicated the claims, rights, and possession of the aborigines. The General Government of the Union, at the dawn of our political existence, adopted the principle ascerted by the colonizing Governments of Europe, and established the effect that the absolute title was in the United States, subject only to the limited right of occupancy, and with the unconditional privilege of extinguishing that right.

Under the operation of these principles, the purchase and extinguishment of the Indian right has been gradually progressing in the ratio in which local and the interior occupancy were demanded by our people for settlement. *Pari passu* with the progress of the public surveys been carried, in preparing the way for homesteads, and the means by which to pass to our people unincumbered and indefeasible titles.

The surveying system is now organized into twelve different districts, and the lines of the public surveys have already been extended over more than one-fourth of the whole surface of the public domain.

That surface, as heretofore stated, is.....1,450,000,000 acres.

Of this, there have been surveyed and prepared for market, of net public lands, that is, exclusive of school lands, &c., ... 401,604,988 acres.

have never been offered, and are, consequently, now liable to public sale, in addition to which, there were upwards of... 80,000,000 acres subject to entry at private sale on the 30th September last.

Of the public domain there have been disposed of by private claims, grants, sales, &c., embracing surveyed and unsurveyed lands, 303,862,404 acres, which, deducted from the whole surface, as above stated, leaves undisposed of an area of.....1,086,137,538 acres.

During the fiscal year ending June 30, 1857, and the quarter ending September 30, 1857, public lands have been surveyed and reported to the extent of.....22,889,461.00 acres.

During the same period.....21,160,037.27 have been disposed of as follows:

For cash.....	5,300,550.31	"
Located with military warrants	7,381,010.00	"
Returned under swamp land grant.....	3,302,475.96	"
Estimated quantity of railroad grants, of March, 1857.....	5,116,000.00	"

The amount of money received on cash sales is.....$4 225,908.18.

This shows a falling off in land receipts from those for the corresponding period of the preceding year of $5,322,145 99, with a falling off during the same period, in the *location* of lands with warrants, of more than 20 per cent.

Whatever may have been the cause of this diminution, the fact demonstrates that, long before the prostration of all credit by the suspension of the banking institutions, the investment in wild lands had greatly decreased.

In the territory of the United States there are eighty-three organized land districts, each having a register and receiver, for the sale and disposal of the public lands. Yet we have no land district in either the Territory of New Mexico or Utah, as in New Mexico the public surveys have been executed to a very limited extent, owing to Indian hostilities. In Utah the surveys had rapidly progressed, until the surveyor general abandoned his post owing to open hostilities of the Mormon authorities at Salt Lake City. The extent of the surveys, since the beginning of the operations in Utah, exhibits a sphere of field work embracing 2,000,000 acres.

A due regard for the public interests, as well as a proper respect for the prosperity and advancement of New Mexico, would justify, if not loudly call upon Congress to establish a land office and a board of commissioners for the adjudication of Spanish and Mexican claims in that Territory. It is important to all its future prosperity promptly to separate private property from the public lands before the settlements become dense, and consequent conflicts of claim and title arise.

By the act of April 24, 1820, the old credit system of sales of land was abolished, the cash system substituted, and the minimum price fixed at $1.25 per acre. This is the great basis of our present system of sales. The policy of the law is to favor the actual settler. It is a humane, wise, and just policy. When the hardy pioneer breaks off from the comforts and security of a long-settled community, and encounters the hazard and endures the hardships and deprivations of a new settlement in the forest, he has rendered a positive service to the Government; and to deny him the right of securing his home and improvements, in preference to all others who would profit by his sacrifices, would be a crying injustice.

When an actual settler goes upon lands which have been offered for sale, and builds himself a house, the law allows him twelve months within which to pay for a quarter section of the land. If he enters upon unoffered land, or lands which have never been surveyed, he is permitted to file his declaration of intention to enter, and is not required to pay for his pre-emption till the day appointed by proclamation for public sale of the lands. Public policy may cause an indefinite postponement of the sale of the land, and the consequence is, that with this inchoate, imperfect right, he continues to occupy without perfecting his title. This privilege to enter being a personal right, its transfer or assignment is prohibited by law.

By thus conceding a privilege, and fixing no time in which he is required to perfect his title, an interest is created in opposition to a public sale by proclamation, when the good of the country may require it The suggestion, therefore, that settlers upon unoffered lands should be required to make their proof and payment within a specified period, is approved

Pre-emptions upon unsurveyed lands are now limited to particular States and Territories. A general law authorizing pre-emptions upon lands of this character, superseding or repealing special statutes on the subject, would conduce to the harmony of the system; and such a law is recommended.

In order to remove all doubt in the construction of existing law, pre-emption privileges should also be extended to alternate reserved railroad sections, in cases where settlements have been made after the final allotment. The enhanced value of such lands presents only a stronger reason why preference should be given to settlers over all others.

The mode of disposing of the public lands under existing legislation is simple, uniform, and complete. Lands are introduced into market and opened to free competition at public sale by the President's proclamation, which, at the same time, notifies settlers to come forward and secure their homes at the minimum price, without risk of competition at public sale. Then such lands as remain thus undisposed of, are open to free purchase at private sale, at the ordinary minimum of $1.25 per acre, or when in market ten years and upwards, at reduced prices; always, however, with the preference right of purchase awarded to the actual settler.

The public domain is the property of the United States, and the individual citizens thereof have equal rights of purchase. Actual settlers, as already shown, are amply protected by law from interference, and efficient safeguards are thrown around their rights. As an evidence of this, it is estimated that in the sales of the last year three-fourths of the sold and located lands were taken for actual settlement. Large districts of the public lands are valuable, however, only for the timber found upon them; they are unsuitable for settlement; and to restrict their purchase to settlers alone would prevent their sale for an indefinite period, and hold out a standing temptation to trespass and plunder.

An amendment of the law fixing the maximum compensation of the registers and receivers, so as to restrict the payment for any one quarter or fraction of a quarter to a *pro rata* allowance, both for salary and commissions, is approved and recommended.

Under the bounty-land law of 3d March, 1855, large sums have been received at some of the local land offices, for the location of warrants, and claims have been presented by several of the officers for the whole amount of fees collected. The General Land Office has decided, and the decision has been sanctioned by the department, that, in view of the limitation as to maximum, in the act of 20th April, 1818, and the terms of the 2d and 3d sections of the act of 22d March, 1852, in connexion with the act of 1855, there is no authority of law for the allowance of any excess over the maximum compensation for commissions, as fixed by legal act of 1818.

The act of 12th January, 1825, authorizes repayment of purchase money to be made from the Treasury in all cases of sales of lands made by the local land officers, where the Government is unable, from want of title in itself, to issue patents to the purchasers.

My predecessors have construed this act as providing for repayments in all cases where from any cause the sale could not be confirmed; and the uniform practice has been in conformity with that view of the law.

This practice is unquestionably founded in strict justice, and I have not deemed it best to disturb it, although inclined to the opinion that a strict construction of the law would limits it operation to the class of cases specifically embraced therein. Should such a construction be entertained of the propriety of my action in this instance, I would respectfully recommend a supplementary legislation is respectfully recommended as may be called for in the premises.

The interesting communication, which accompanies this report, of the late secretary of the Territory of Utah, respecting the mineral resources of that distant Territory, may suggest the propriety of providing for a geological survey thereof. It is not doubted that vast quantities of gold and silver, copper, lead, and iron ores are to be found embedded in its soil; and their discovery and development could not fail to conduce to the public prosperity.

The report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs furnishes an interesting view of the peculiar people, with whom this Government holds the most important relations.

The members of the Indian tribes within our limits, while they are not citizens, cannot, with strict propriety, be termed foreigners. "Domestic dependent nations, their relations to the United States resemble those of a ward to his guardian. They look to our Government for protection, and feel, and are treated, as wards." While we negotiate treaties with them, which are ratified with all the solemnity befitting a contract to which nations are parties, we undertake to construe and fulfil the treaty provisions, acknowledging no responsibility but such as we may owe to truth, honor, and justice.

As the limits of our civilization have been extended, the number of these children of the forest, with whom our people are brought into immediate contact, have increased. Treaties multiply; rights are acquired; complaints and adjustments are sumed; obedience is promised on the one part, protection is guaranteed on the other. The Indian Bureau is grown to be a great foreign office, conducting the correspondence and adjusting the relations of numerous quasi foreign Governments; while it is at the same time charged with the control, regulation, and protection of the rights of the individual members of those Governments.

In the performance of these duties questions are presented of the most difficult character, in the solution of which it is almost impossible to arrive at a conclusion which shall reconcile the interests of sound policy with the requirements of the law. The intercourse act of 1834 was adapted to a country, in the wild state, which no longer exists, and it might be judicious to revise it. The wide dissimilarity, too, of the provisions of the parent treaties recently negotiated with the several tribes, agreed for each of the four tribes of Cherokees, Creeks, Chickasaws, and Choctaws. Among these tribes there are educated, well-read men, to whom the holding of a court in their country would create, in the minds of the people, respect for the laws, and give dignity to the administration of justice.

The Indians of the Territories of Washington and Oregon are still more remote from us, and their disposition on their part evidently springs from disbelief in the strength and ability of this Government to punish them for trespasses committed upon our settlements. It is the duty of the Government to dispel from their minds. This can best be done by peaceful means; but if an appropriation be made to defray the expenses of a delegation from each of the large tribes in those distant Territories, to Washington and other eastern cities. Let them know, by personal observation, our numbers, our power, our resources, and our unity of strength. They would readily conclude that further hostility would be absurd; and when they carried the story of our greatness and power to their people, a change would come over their feelings, and we might then reasonably hope for the establishment, by treaty, of a permanent and lasting peace between us. Such an appropriation would be, in my judgment, an act of the most economical character, as the money belonging to certain Indian tribes. The several treaties under which this amount was derived devolved upon the President the duty of causing it to be invested in some "safe and profitable stocks," to be held by the Secretary of the Interior in trust for the respective tribes. In pursuance of your directions, these Indian trust funds were invested in such stocks as he deemed safe and profitable. The amount of bonds purchased was $1,481,476.03, costing $1,291,077.49.

The investment having been made at a time of unusual financial embarrassment, we are enabled to make a profit of $190,398 54 for the Indian tribes, and at the same time afford relief, to some extent, to the business community.

The report of the Commissioner of Pensions presents a satisfactory view of the operations of that bureau during the last year. The business of the office has been conducted up to date, as nearly as it is practicable; and the large clerical force required to despatch the heavy labors devolved upon it by the recent laws granting bounty land, has been reduced, so as to conform to the present exigencies of the office.

For many years past, the practice has prevailed of paying to the children, and sometimes to the administrators, of deceased revolutionary soldiers and their deceased widows, the amount of pension to which such soldiers or widows would have been entitled, had they succeeded in living good their claims during their lifetime, but never to grandchildren, as such. At the last term of the Supreme Court it was decided, in a case involving the distribution of certain pension moneys which had been paid to an administrator for the exclusive benefit of the children of a deceased child of a revolutionary soldier, that grandchildren, *per stirpes*, stood in the same relation to such claims as children; and it was subsequently contended that the effect of that decision was not only to extend the benefit of pension claims from the dead to, but to enlarge it, so as to embrace a class of claimants not previously recognised by it.

Seeing that a large amount of money had already been drawn from the treasury under the practice of the office, and doubting whether the court had gone beyond the mere question of the case then involved in the cause before it, and decided as to the law on which that practice was founded, I availed myself of the first case that arose to elicit the views of the Attorney General, both as to the effect of the decision of the court and the legality of the practice of the department. He thoroughly investigated the whole subject, and gave a most lucid and convincing opinion on the law of the case; in which he came to the conclusion, that soldiers or widows who might have been entitled to pensions in their lifetime, but died in ignorance of their right or neglected to claim the same, left no estate in their claims which could be inherited either by grandchildren or children; that arrears of pension, which alone, by the statute, were inheritable, only existed in cases where a claim had been filed in the lifetime of the party at the death of the pensioner, a portion was left unpaid; and that the Supreme Court, in the decision referred to, had not passed upon that question. In this opinion I concurred; and as there was no law for the payment of such claims, and as no money could be drawn from the treasury without a previous appropriation, any payment ordered by me would have been against law, and would have amounted to a naked act of legislation by an executive officer. I felt no hesitation, therefore, in ordering the discontinuance of the practice in question, and all the cases coming within it will be indefinitely suspended, unless Congress shall pass a law, giving to children and grandchildren the pensions their deceased ancestors would have received had the proper proof been made out during their lifetime.

A pension is a bounty given by Government for meritorious personal service, and the first law granting pensions for revolutionary services confined the bounty to the *indigent* soldiers But whether this restriction be correct or not. it is self-evident that the great inducement, in all pension laws, is to relieve and compensate, in his own proper person, the self-sacrificing soldier, who risked his life, wasted his energies, and neglected his private affairs in the service of his country. The law has extended its beneficence from the soldier to his widow, and there it has stopped. If Congress shall take one step further, and provide for children and grandchildren on account of the services of their ancestors, the question arises, why take care of the children and grandchildren of those whose fortune it was to live till Congress had the power of providing for their issuance, "with such guards and restrictions as may seem advisable for *their protection therein*." There can beno doubt that our people will succeed in getting possession of these homes of the Indians. If Congress shall fail to act, and thus open no door by which the Indians can divest themselves of their titles, it may be apprehended that unscrupulous men will, without law, obtain possession of their lands for a trifling consideration, and stand the chances of an ultimate title. The interest of the reserves requires the passage of a law regulating the alienation of his right to his land, and securing him the payment of a fair equivalent for the same.

For their numbers, the income of most of these tribes, in the way of annuity, is large; but experience has shown that the system heretofore pursued, of paying them in money at stated periods, has been productive of evil rather than good. It represses industry and self-reliance; it encourages idleness and extravagance, and draws around them a swarm of unprincipled traders. In many of the treaties which have lately been negotiated with these tribes, this provision has been inserted:

"The object of this instrument being to advance the interests of said Indians, it is agreed" that "Congress may hereafter make such provision by law as experience shall prove to be necessary."

If Congress, in the exercise of this power, should clothe this department with some discretion in the payment of annuities, so that the same could be used as a means of their moral reform and elevation, instead of the injurious system now prevailing, of distributing money *per capita*, decided advantages may be reasonably anticipated.

The plan which has suggested itself as the most likely to arrest the demoralization now rapidly increasing, and, at the same time, lay a solid foundation for their ultimate civilization, may be briefly outlined thus:

They should be gathered on smaller reservations, and in denser settlements. They must be familiarized with the idea of separate property, by encouraging them to erect houses as homes for themselves and their families. For this purpose the reservations should be divided into farms of suitable size, and distributed among the individuals of the tribes, to hold in severalty, as their separate and private estate, but without the power of selling, mortgaging, leasing, or in any manner alienating the same, except to members of the same tribe or themselves. Settlements by white men within the reserves should be prohibited, and the *prohibition rigidly enforced;* and increased efforts should be made to suppress the sale of ardent spirits, to effect which the co-operation of the Indian authorities should be secured. Farms should be established in central positions, at which the children of the tribe should be collected and required to labor, and where they could be taught the rudiments of an education. A certain number of them should be apprenticed to useful trades, and the surplus of the proceeds of their labor, whether on the farm or in the workship, should be divided among their parents. Here they would be taught the great truths—that labor is honorable, and that want and suffering inevitably follow in the train of improvidence and idleness. Implements of husbandry, blankets, and clothing, useful articles of furniture, books, and, indeed, everything which promises to give com ort to their homes, should be purchased and divided *per capita*.

Should their income be more than sufficient to meet the outlay required for these purposes, then the remainder might be paid in money, as now, the annual indiscriminate distribution of their national funds among the Indians is gradually working their ruin; whereas a wise policy, such as any of the foregoing treatment should adopt, would necessarily produce the happiest results.

The details of the system should, of course, be modified to suit the varied conditions of the several tribes; but the uniform application of its leading principles to the government of the tribes in the central and southern superintendencies is, I conceive, indispensable.

The condition of affairs in the southern superintendency presents a gratifying spectacle. The four great tribes of Choctaws, Chickasaws, Cherokees, and Creeks, with the kindred band of Seminoles, occupying the territory west of Arkansas, have steadily improved in morals, in education, in the comprehension of, and respect for, the rights of persons and of property, and in a knowledge of the theory and principles of government. They have regularly organized governments, constructed upon the model of our own. State Constitutions, Governors, Legislatures, codes of laws, and judicial magistrates to expound them. There the path of duty is plain. Every encourag