

sources. It even throws the entire lands a perpetual charge upon this treasury. It does not return to the people moneys accidentally or unavoidably paid by them to the Government, by which they are not wanted; but compels the people to pay moneys into the treasury for the mere purpose of erecting a surplus for distribution to their state governments. If this principle be once admitted, it is not difficult to perceive to what consequences it may lead. Already this bill by throwing the land system on the revenues from imports for support virtually distributes the states a part of those revenues.

The proportion may be increased, from time to time, without any departure from the principle now asserted, until the state governments shall derive all the funds necessary for their support from the Treasury of the United States, or, if a sufficient supply should be obtained by some states and not by others, the deficient States might complain, and to put an end to all further difficulty, Congress, without assuming any new principle, need go but one step further and put the salaries of all the state governors, judges, and other officers, with a sufficient sum for other expenses, in their general appropriation bill.

It appears to me that a more direct road to consolidation cannot be devised. Money is power, and in that government which pays all the public officers of the states, will all political power be substantially concentrated. The state governments, if governments they might be called, would lose all their independence and dignity. The economy which now distinguished them, would be converted into a profusion, limited only by the extent of the supply. Being the dependents of the general government and looking to its treasury as the source of all their emoluments, the state officers, under whatever names they might pass, and by whatever forms their duties might be prescribed, would in effect be the mere stipendiaries and instruments of the central power.

I am quite sure that the intelligent people of our several states, will be satisfied on a little reflection, that it is neither wise nor safe to release the members of their local legislatures from the responsibility of levying the taxes necessary to support their state governments, and vest it in Congress, over most of whose members they have no control.

They will not think it expedient that Congress shall be the tax gather and pymaster of all their state governments, thus amalgamating all their officers into one mass of common interest and common feeling. It is too obvious that such a course would subvert our well balanced system of government, and ultimately deprive us of all the blessings now derived from our happy union.

However willing I might be that any unavoidable surplus in the treasury should be returned to the people through their state governments, I cannot assent to the principle that a surplus may be created for the purpose of distribution. Viewing this bill as in effect assuming the right, not only to create a surplus for that purpose, but to divide the contents of the Treasury among the States without limitation, from whatever source they may be derived, and asserting the power to raise and appropriate money for the support of every state government and institution, as well as for making every local improvement, however trivial, I cannot give it my assent.

It is difficult to perceive what advantages would accrue to the old states or the new, from the system of distribution which this bill proposes, if it were otherwise unobjectionable. It requires no argument to prove that if three millions of dollars a year, or any other sum, shall be taken out of the Treasury by this bill for distribution, it must be replaced by the same sum collected from the people through some other means. The old states will receive annually a sum of money from the Treasury, but they will pay in a larger sum, together with the expenses of collection and distribution. It is only their proportion of *seven-eights* of the proceeds of land sales which they are to receive; but they must pay their due proportion of the *whole*. Disguise it as we may, the bill proposes to them a dead loss, in the ratio of *eight to seven*, in addition to expenses and other incidental losses. This assertion is not the less true because it may not at first be palpable. Their receipts will be in large sums, but their payment in small ones. The governments of the states will receive *seven* dollars for which the people of the states will pay *eight*. The large sums received will be payable to the senses; the small sums paid, it requires thought to identify. But a little consideration will satisfy the people that the effect is the same as if *seven hundred dollars* were given them from the treasury, for which they were at the same time required to pay in taxes direct or indirect, *eight hundred*.

I deceive myself greatly if the new states would find their interest promoted by such a system as this bill proposes. Their true policy consists in the rapid settling and improvement of the waste lands within their limits. As a means of hastening those events, they have been long looking to a reduction in the price of public lands upon the final payment of the public debt. The effect of the proposed system would be to prevent that reduction. It is true the bill reserves to Congress the power to reduce the price, but the effect of its details, as now arranged, would probably be forever to prevent its exercise.

With the just men who inhabit the new states, it is a sufficient reason to reject this system, that it is in violation of the fundamental laws of the republic and its constitution. But if it were a mere question of interest or expediency, they would still reject it. They would not sell their bright prospect of increasing wealth and glowing power at such a price. They would not place a sum of money to be paid into their treasures, in competition with the settlement of their waste lands and the increase of their population. They would not consider a small or large annual sum to be paid to their governments and immediately expended, as an equivalent for that enduring wealth which is composed of flocks and herds, and cultivated farms. No temptation will allure them from that object of abiding interest, the settlement of their waste lands and the increase of a hardy race of free citizens, their glory in peace and their defence in war.

On the whole, I adhere to the opinion expressed by me in my annual message of 1832, but it is our true policy that the public lands shall cease as soon as practicable to be a source of revenue, except for the payment of those general charges which grow out of the acquisition of the lands, their survey and sale. Although these expenses have not been met by the proceeds of sales heretofore, it is quite certain they will be hereafter, even after a considerable reduction in the price. By meeting in the treasury so much of the general charge as arises from that source they will hereafter, as they have been heretofore, be disposed of for the common benefit of the United States, according to the compacts of cession. I do not doubt that it is the real interest of each and all the states in the union, and particularly of the new states, that the price of these lands shall be reduced and graduated; and that after they had been offered for a certain number of years, the refuse remaining unsold shall be abandoned to the States, and the machinery of our land system entirely withdrawn. It cannot be supposed the compacts intended that the United States should retain forever a title to lands within the states which are of no value, and no doubt is entertained that the general interest would be best promoted by surrendering such lands to the states.

This plan for disposing of the public lands impairs

no principle, violates no compact, and deranges no system.—Already has the price of those lands been reduced from two dollars per acre to one dollar and a quarter, and upon the will of Congress, it depends whether there shall be a further reduction.

While the burdens of the east are diminishing by the reduction of the duties upon imports, it seems but equal justice that the chief burden of the west should be lightened in an equal degree at least. It would be just to the old states and the new, conciliates every interest, disarms the subject in all its dangers and add another guarantee to the perpetuity of our happy union.

Sensible, however of the difficulties which surround this important subject, I can only add to my regrets, at finding myself again compelled to disagree with the legislative power, the sincere declaration, that any plan which shall promise a final and satisfactory disposition of the question, and be compatible with the constitution and public faith shall have my hearty concurrence.

ANDREW JACKSON.

December 4th, 1833.

REPORT OF THE POSTMASTER GENERAL
GENERAL POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,

November, 30, 1833.

To the President of the United States:

SIR—When in 1829, the functions of this Department devolved upon me, the annual transportation of the mail amounted to 13,700,000. The contracts then in existence, with the other expenses of the Department, had within the year ending the 30th June 1829, diminished its surplus revenue \$101,256 03, and those contracts were still in force from one to four years in prospect.

The surplus available revenue had been reduced to the nominal amount of \$230,849 07. But it has subsequently been ascertained, that there had been expenses incurred for transportation performed prior to the 1st of July, 1829, which were not embraced in that account, to the amount of \$34,248 79.

Which reduced the real surplus to \$166,600 31. The annual transportation of the mail was, on the 1st July, 1833, 26,854,485 miles.

The annual amount of the transportation of the mail in stages and steamboats on the 1st of July, 1829, was \$6,507,818 miles.

The annual amount of the transportation of the mail in stages and steamboats, on the 1st of July, 1833, was 18,322,576 miles.

The expense of transporting the mail for the year ending 30th June, in 1829 was \$1,153,646 21. The expense of transporting the mail for the year ending 30th June, 1833, was \$1,894,938 08.

The gross amount of postages, constituting the revenues of the Department, was for the year ending 30th June, 1829, \$1,707,418 42.

The gross amount of postages for the year ending 30th June, 1833, was \$2,616,538 27.

The incidental expenses of the Department for the year ending 30th June, 1829, amounted to \$69,249 08.

The incidental expenses of the Department for the year ending 30th June 1833, amounted to \$87,701 61.

The number of post offices, in the United States, on the 1st of July, 1829, was 8,004.

On the 1st of July, 1832, the number of post offices in the United States was 10,127.

The increase of the annual transportation of the mail within the four years ending the 30th June, 1833, is 13,154,485 miles, nearly equal to the whole amount of transportation in 1829.

The increase of the annual amount of postages within the same period, is \$909,119 85, and the whole amount is more than the double of what it was in 1825.

The average expense of transporting the mail in 1829, was eight cents and four-tenths of a cent per mile.

The average expense of transporting the mail in 1833, is seven cents and fifty-seven hundredths of a cent per mile; making a difference in the rate per mile, of eighty-three hundredths of a cent, equal, for the whole service, to \$222,892 22 per year less, in proportion to the service performed, than the expense of transportation in 1829, besides a great increase in expedition between the principal commercial cities, and a much greater proportion of the whole performed in stages.

After carrying into effect the law of the last Congress establishing new mail routes, the present length of mail roads in the United States, amounts to 119,915 miles, viz:

Miles.

In Maine 3,824 In Florida Miles.

N. Hampshire 2,460 Alabama 4,433

Vermont 2,531 Mississippi 2,462

Massachusetts 4,845 Louisiana 1,462

Rhode Island 491 Arkansas 2,309

Connecticut 2,701 Tennessee 6,761

New York 13,256 Kentucky 5,993

New Jersey 1,961 Ohio 8,977

Pennsylvania 11,010 Michigan 1,495

Delaware 494 Indiana 5,361

Maryland 2,102 Illinois 4,459

Virginia 10,588 Missouri 2,170

N. Carolina 6,850 Making to-

S. Carolina 4,516 together 119,916

Georgia 5,274 In stages, 17,693,830 miles.

In steamboats, 628,737 " In horseback and in sulkies 5,531,900 "

Making together 26,854,485 "

The increase of transportation from the 1st July, 1832, to the 1st July, 1833, has been,

In stages, 1,471,096 miles.

In steamboats, 129,436 " In horseback and in sulkies, 1,628,932 "

Making together, 3,229,464 "

The method in which the accounts of the expenses of transporting the mail have always been kept in this department, has led to a misapprehension of the means of extending improvements in mail facilities. It appears, from the earliest records of the department, to have been a rule not to enter to the credit of a contractor, nor to charge to the account of transportation, the expense of carrying the mail on his route, till after he had signed his contract and bond, and returned them to the department with proper security, though the service may have been regularly performed, and, in many instances, the moneys actually paid. It has sometimes happened that contracts of the greatest magnitude have, from various causes, remained for more than a year unreturned. In such cases, though the expenses have been incurred, they do

not appear in the transportation account, and the moneys may have been paid to the contractors, they stand on the books as balances to that amount due from them to the department, constituting a part of its surplus fund; when, in fact, they constitute a part of the actual expense incurred for the transportation of the mail. The consequence is, that the expenses for transporting the mail within any given period of time, as shown in the accounts, and reported annually through the Executive, have been always calculated to exhibit an amount considerably less than what has actually been incurred. This is an imperfection not of recent origin, but one which appears to have been co-existent with the department. When the number of contracts was few, and the surplus revenue bore a large ratio to its whole annual amount, the effect was unimportant; but in the increased number of mail routes, and the diminution of its surplus revenue, it was calculated to produce serious inconvenience. From the statements growing out of this system, thus illusory in their results, together with the great expense of carrying into effect the law of the last Congress establishing new mail routes, and a disposition to gratify the wishes of the public in the improvement of mail facilities, I was led to carry those improvements to an extent which it was found the resources of the department would not sustain. When the inconvenience was felt, the cause was carefully investigated, and the following result was disclosed. Prompt directions were given for the correction of the error in future. It is not possible to determine, to an exact certainty, the whole expense incurred for transportation within any recent period; because it will often happen that improvements will become necessary, even for the fulfillment of existing laws, the expenses of which, for want of proper evidence, must be reserved for subsequent adjustment, and to come into the account for a later period than that in which the services were performed. But these variations are of an inconsiderable amount, compared with the differences resulting from the system heretofore observed.

On the 30th of June, 1832, which was the close of the first quarter in which I had assumed the functions of the department, the expenses which had been incurred for transporting the mail were \$34,248 76 more than the amount stated in my report to that day.

On the first day of July, 1832, the day to which my last report reaches, there was stated to be a surplus of available funds, after defraying all the expenses of the department up to that day, of \$202,370. It is however now ascertained, that the expenses incurred for transportation which had actually been performed prior to the 1st July, 1832, beyond the whole amount of its available funds, admitting that no losses of postage should be sustained, The gross amount of postages for the year ending the 30th June, 1832, was 2,616,538 27. The gross amount of postages for the year ending June 30, 1833, was 2,616,538 27. Making together an annual recompence of the expenses of the department, of

205,655 07. It is however now ascertained, that the expenses incurred for transportation which had actually been performed prior to the 1st July, 1832, beyond the whole amount of its available funds, admitting that no losses of postage should be sustained, The gross amount of postages for the year ending the 30th June, 1832, was 2,616,538 27. The gross amount of postages for the year ending June 30, 1833, was 2,616,538 27. Making an increase for the year, over the former year, of \$357,968 10. The net proceeds of postages, after deducting commissions to post masters and the contingent expenses of their offices, for the year ending the 30th June, 1832, was \$1,543,958 49. For the year ending June 30, 1833, it was 1,790,254 65.

Making an increase of net proceeds for the year of \$317,156 16.

The expenses of the Department, incurred for the year ending June 30, 1833, were as follows, viz:

Compensation to postmasters, including the contingent expenses of their offices—

3d quarter, 1832, \$202,431 26

4th do do 200,151 51

1st do 1833 214,935 50

2d do do 208,765 35

————— \$826,283 62

Transportation of the mails—

3d quarter, 1832, 435,892 95

4th do do 441,183 01

1st do 1833 499,185 96

2d do do 518,126 16

————— 1,894,688 08

Incidental expenses for the year, 87,701 61

Making together, \$2,805,673 31

The gross amount of postages, for the same period was,

3d quarter, 1832, 612,689 22

4th do do 630,461 47

1st do 1833 673,357 67

2d do do 633,426 91

————— 2,616,538 27

Leaving a deficit of 192,135 04.

Add this sum paid into the Treasury by irregular deposits, having been placed by the receiving officer to the credit of that department instead of this,

The balance due by the department on the 1st July, 1832, as above stated,

And the department was indebted on the 1st July, 1833, beyond the amount of available balances due to it, in the sum of \$195,208 40.

Making together, \$2,123,289 42.

The annual expense of transporting the mail under existing contracts, with all their improvements, is

————— \$2,033,289 42