

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

JULY 17, 1856.—Submitted.

JULY 24, 1856.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. YULEE made the following

REPORT.

[To accompany Bill S. 387.]

*The Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads, to whom was referred the memorial of the citizens of Apalachicola, in the State of Florida, beg leave to report :*

Your committee have carefully and thoroughly considered the said memorial, and the exhibits accompanying the same, asking an appropriation for their mails, and setting out the grounds and reasons of the application.

In addition to the said memorial, your committee received from the Postmaster General two other petitions which had been submitted to him, bearing upon and relating to the same subject, which are herewith submitted—the one, a petition from the citizens of Bainbridge, Georgia ; the other from New York, signed by many of the merchants and underwriters of said city.

These two petitions unite in urging the request of the memorialists, and the three united urge the subject as demanded alike by the commercial importance of the city of Apalachicola, and the constant intercourse and large trade existing between said port and the city of New York.

Your committee would briefly state the result of their investigation :

*First.* The exhibits accompanying memorial show that the present mail boats transport the mail from Apalachicola, Florida, to Bainbridge, Georgia, at a loss annually of \$27,775 19, showing the present pay from the department to be totally inadequate to the support of said mail route.

In this estimate the original cost of the boats is not included ; but the loss is shown by a balance sheet of expenses in running the boats on the one hand, and then estimating and selling out their total receipts from all sources, as well their contract pay from the department, as also from such trade as they are enabled to obtain, showing the above difference to their loss annually.

*Second.* That the present contractor, from the time he assumed the service, and before the contract was transferred to him from the original contractor, has carried the mail with perfect regularity, and given entire satisfaction.

*Third.* That the two mail boats now in the service are new, and the best ever before engaged therein, and that the memorialists desire their retention.

*Fourth.* That the past experience on said mail route, of letting the contract to bidders, shows a system of speculation by parties in many instances irresponsible; and has heretofore almost invariably resulted in failure and consequent embarrassment to the department.

That in the present contractor an opportunity is offered of remedying this evil of speculation upon the department, inasmuch as he is not the original contractor, but, at the instance of many of the citizens of Apalachicola, he generously assumed the carrying of the mail, and placed two new and first class steamers in the service, and continued so to act in behalf of said city, and in aid of the government in the transportation of its mails, until the contract (which was recently done) was transferred to him by the department.

Your committee, in view of the facts which brought them to the above conclusions, felt that the peculiar circumstances of the mails in that vicinity required some special legislation with a view to remedy, if possible, the evil, and that the government, while giving a mail as a matter of right to that community, should extend the justice of a helping hand to give it stability.

The city of Apalachicola, in commercial importance and trade, ranks as third on the Gulf of Mexico; and her constant trade with New York and Boston in the north, and New Orleans, Mobile, and Galveston in the south, demonstrates the importance of a stable and regular mail to herself, as also to those cities; and this fact is evidenced in part by the petition of the merchants of New York, herewith submitted.

And your committee were admonished that a mail, to be valuable and of service, must be regular and stable.

With these views, and satisfied that the peculiar circumstances connected with the service on this mail route require special legislation to relieve the citizens and cities named of the hardship and embarrassment under which they suffer, accordingly beg leave to report the following bill and recommend its passage.