

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

FEBRUARY 19, 1869.—Ordered to be printed, and that one thousand additional copies be printed for the use of the Senate.

Mr. ANTHONY, from the Committee on Printing, submitted the following

R E P O R T .

The Committee on Printing, instructed by the Senate "to examine and report the cost of each and all documents annually published for distribution, and to inquire and report as to the expediency of discontinuing the distribution of all public documents except the Congressional Globe and the report of the Commissioner of Agriculture, with a provision that such documents may be printed and disposed of at the cost price; to invite proposals for the publication of the actual proceedings and debates in Congress, and the cost of such publication by the Congressional Printer," and "to inquire what changes, if any, are necessary in the present laws providing for the publication of the laws of the United States," report:

That the public printing has been much discussed, and yet, perhaps, has been but imperfectly understood since the organization of the federal government. The art of typography, which fuses together thought and labor, is plain and perceptible only to those who are conversant with its technicalities, and while numerous attempts have been made to review and to reduce the cost of printing for Congress, the consequent legislation has often been so indefinite as to afford greater facilities for frauds and abuses.

Your committee, in obedience to the above instructions, propose to review the execution of the public printing since the commencement of the federal government, showing how and by whom it has been executed, while giving such information as they have been able to obtain concerning the cost of the different publications made by order of Congress, which they propose to classify under three heads: The public documents and other printing executed as a part of legislation; the reporting and publication of the debates in Congress, and the publication of the laws of the United States.

CONGRESSIONAL PRINTING.

The first Congress, following the example of the colonial legislative bodies, had its printing done, under the direction of its officers, by the publishers of newspapers in the city in which the sessions were held. The Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House made yearly contracts for publishing the journals and the documents ordered by their respective bodies and settled the accounts for printing and binding. That the quantity of printing was not large may be inferred from the estimates for the first session, in which \$2,300 is regarded as amply sufficient to defray all bills for the stationery, printing, bookbinding and other

contingent or incidental expenses of the Senate, while it was estimated that \$3,657 would defray all similar expenditures for the House.

The Senate Journal of the 1st session of the 1st Congress, which made 172 folio pages with an index, was printed by Thomas Greenleaf, the proprietor of the Advertiser, in which, historians tell us, the administration of Washington was opposed "with a great degree of virulence." * The House Journal of the 1st session of the 1st Congress, which made 177 pages with an index, was printed by Francis Child and John Swain. † The few reports and statements for the departments published, were printed by Archibald McLean and by Samuel London & Son. It is not probable that the entire cost of the printing for the 1st session of the 1st Congress was over \$3,000, and it is but just to say that the work was well executed, the paper being far superior to that now used in printing the congressional documents.

The printing of Congress was awarded at Philadelphia, (as it had been in New York,) by the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of Representatives, at the commencement of each session. But when Washington city was made the seat of government, a change became necessary, for there was nothing here that was necessary for the execution of the work. All supplies had to be brought from other places; printers, presses, types, paper, and even fuel had to be got from elsewhere, and upon short notice. Congress upon its arrival here was in a state of destitution for almost everything. All supplies were slow and inadequate, and printing especially was so backward that a special committee was raised in the House of Representatives to contrive the ways and means of expediting it. Mr. John Randolph, of Virginia, was chairman of that committee, and reported a plan which was partly adopted, and gave partial but inadequate relief.

The plan which the exigency of the case required was finally forced upon the conviction of members; it was for the expiring Congress to take upon itself the office of supplying the prominent wants of the new Congress. It did so; fuel, stationery, and printing were among the things provided.

The Secretary of the Senate, and the Clerk of the House, by a resolution of the two bodies, were each directed within thirty days after the close of each session of Congress to advertise for fuel, stationery, and printing for the next Congress. Eight or nine months' notice was given that there might be ample time for providing these things at a distance, and bringing them here.

This assumption on the part of the expiring Congress was subsequently much discussed, and it was once denounced by the Hon. Mr. Benton as gratuitous and unauthorized. The new Congress, he asserted, not yet born, could not have created an agent to do this business. The agent was a voluntary one, and the validity of his acts depended upon the acquiescence of the party to be accommodated. If the fuel was good, the stationery good, and the printer good, the new Congress might acquiesce in what was intended for their benefit; if bad, or even if it chose to retain the exercise of its own powers and the dispensation of its patronage, it might reject the whole and supply itself. But the new Congress did acquiesce. The fuel, the stationery, and the printer were

* The Journal of the Senate for the 2d session of the 40th Congress made 792 octavo pages, of which 1,550 copies were printed and bound at a cost, according to the standard scale of prices, of \$2,298 87.

† The Journal of the House of Representatives for the 2d session of the 40th Congress made (without the index and appendices) 1,224 octavo pages, of which 1,666 copies were printed at a cost of \$4,357 02.

always acceptable, and from this acceptance the act of the expiring Congress derived its sanction and validity.

What is now known as the "message and documents" was first printed soon after the seat of government was established at Washington. President Jefferson, instead of personally addressing the two houses of Congress at the commencement of the session next following his inauguration, (as his predecessors had done,) sent a message in writing with accompanying documents. The whole budget made a volume of about one hundred small octavo pages, and there was a lively discussion in the House of Representatives on a motion to print 500 copies. Mr. Bayard, of Delaware, asserted that 150 copies would be enough, and urged an amendment for printing that number on grounds of economy. Mr. Giles, of Virginia, replied that he meant to practice economy, but not the economy of withholding information from the people. The house voted to print 500 copies, the cost of the printing and binding of which was \$520 75.*

Up to the year 1819, the congressional printing was executed by different master-printers in the city of Washington, selected by the Secretary of the Senate and by the Clerk of the House. R. C. Weightman and A. & G. Way did the most of the work; E. D. Kraft having it for one session. J. Gideon, jr., subsequently testified before a congressional committee that the entire force employed at any one time by these master-printers did not exceed 30 to 35, and John C. Rives testified that the

* The cost of printing and binding the annual message of the President of the United States transmitted to Congress at the commencement of the second session of the fortieth Congress in various forms, may be thus summed up:

Title of the document, each being a part of the President's message and accompanying documents.	No. of pages.	No. of copies.	Total cost of printing and binding.
Annual message of the President and accompanying documents.	220	3, 000	\$728 07
Abridgment of the annual message of the President and accompanying documents.	808	35, 000	28, 934 24
Diplomatic correspondence, in two volumes.....	1, 608	10, 050	18, 290 74
Report of the Secretary of State on the commercial relations of the United States with foreign countries, for 1867....	1, 092	7, 500	10, 471 35
Report of the Secretary of War, in two volumes.....	1, 572	4, 550	11, 862 96
Abridgment of the same, in one volume.....	328	2, 500	1, 125 14
Report of the engineer-in-chief.....	872	500	442 66
Report of the Secretary of the Navy.....	320	7, 050	4, 187 46
Report of the Postmaster General.....	178	7, 550	2, 121 45
Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the finances..	510	7, 050	5, 545 78
Report of the Third Auditor.....	18	500	14 47
Report of the Comptroller of the Currency.....	634	2, 550	5, 180 69
Report on commerce and navigation.....	800	10, 000	10, 692 25
Report of the Secretary of the Interior, in two volumes..	952	4 550	7, 090 38
Report of the Commissioner of the General Land Office..	384	1, 000	1, 212 87
Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.....	408	3, 000	1, 539 15
Report of the Commissioner of Pensions.....	42	1, 000	76 41
Report of the Commissioner of Public Buildings.....	34	500	39 98
Report of the architect of the Capitol extension.....	8	500	22 54
Report of the Metropolitan Police Board for 1867.....	8	500	22 54
Report of the Columbia Institution for the Deaf and Dumb	58	2, 500	339 67
Report of the Insane Asylum.....	16	500	27 80
Report (proper) of the acting Commissioner of Agriculture.	18	2, 500	62 48
	10, 888	114, 350	110, 061 08

prices paid to journeymen printers in 1819 were \$10 per week during the session, and \$9 per week in the recess of Congress. Mr. Rives testified: "Then, if a printer worked a reasonable number of hours after night, (say three or four hours,) he did not charge the employer for it, for it is believed that all the work the printer then did at night did not, in the aggregate, reimburse the employers for the time he had been idle in the day waiting for copy.*"

In 1819 a "reform" in the public printing was demanded by the political friends of Messrs. Gales & Seaton, proprietors of the National Intelligencer, who wished to secure for them the entire work. It was asserted that those who had been printing the documents had made more money than they should have done, and that there had been collusion with the officials in obtaining the contracts. A joint committee of Congress was appointed, the chairman of which was Senator James J. Wilson, the proprietor of the Trenton (New Jersey) True American, while the senior member on the part of the House was Timothy Pitkin, of Connecticut, the author of several statistical works. Both of these gentlemen are known to have been practically acquainted with printing, and those associated with them were doubtless selected because they had some knowledge of the subject. They examined witnesses, and after due deliberation, presented a carefully drawn up report on the 19th of April, 1819.†

*The journeymen printers now employed in the Congressional Printing Office, since the enactment of the "eight hour law," earn on an average over \$25 per week.

†The report of the joint committee on the subject of public printing was as follows:

"That regarding the subject committed to them as connected with the convenience of the members, the information of the community, the economy of time and money, and the character of the country, they have given it all the consideration which their other engagements permitted.

"That three different modes of procuring the printing of Congress to be executed have undergone their discussion and deliberation:

"1. Offering the work by advertisement (as at present) to the lowest bidder.

"On this mode the committee would remark, that although at the first glance it may strike the mind as the most economical, experience and observation do not prove it so. Competitors for the work underbid each other, until it is undertaken for a less sum than it can be afforded at; and too small an establishment and too few workmen are consequently employed to execute the printing with the necessary promptitude. Hence, both houses have frequently to wait long for interesting and important communications from the President, or heads of departments, reports, bills, resolutions, &c., upon which they are called to act; and the loss of time thus incurred, considering the daily expense at which Congress sits, costs the nation much more than the difference between the present price and a liberal allowance, which would justify the application of a greater capital to insure the despatch of the work.

"Another disadvantage attending the present mode is, that the reduced price of the work prevents that care and attention from being bestowed on it which is necessary to its neatness and accuracy. And documents are not only distributed through this nation, but dispersed through Europe, which are executed in such an inelegant and incorrect manner, as must bring disgrace and ridicule on the literature and the press of our country.

"That the present price of printing is too low, would readily be discovered by any of the profession; and the fact that no other printer in the District could be found by the Secretary or Clerk, who would execute the work at the contract prices, must satisfy the mind of every gentleman of the truth of what the committee have asserted. How far it is reputable for Congress to endeavor to get their work done below a fair and reasonable price, may be a matter of doubt; but it does not admit of a question that the compensation ought to be adequate to the object of procuring that work to be done at a proper time and in a suitable manner.

"2. A second mode suggested to and considered by the committee was the establishment of a national printing office, (with a bindery and stationery annexed,) which should execute the work of Congress while in session, and that of the various departments of government during the recess; and should do all the binding and furnish all the stationery for the departments, as well as for Congress. To ascertain the amount of expenditures on these objects, inquiries were addressed by the committee to the heads of departments, Attorney General, and Postmaster General, and an answer received from each. Some of the reports were made in such a manner as not to enable the committee to separate the accounts for printing from those for binding and stationery; but the whole amount exceeds \$41,000. Add to this the expenditures of the Senate and House of Representatives on the same subject, for the

The committee expressed the opinion that a national printing office would be likely to secure promptitude, uniformity, accuracy, elegance and economy in the public printing, a prediction which has in recent years been fulfilled. But they preferred to recommend a plan for the public printing which gave it as a largess to the dominant political party. Congress passed a joint resolution, which was approved on the 3d of March, 1819, establishing a tariff of prices, and providing for the election by each House, by ballot, of a printer to execute its work during the next Congress. It was also provided that nothing contained in the resolution shall prevent the choice of the same printer by the Senate and the House of Representatives. The result of the passage of this joint resolution was, as the "annals of Congress" shows, an annual consumption of much of the time of Congress in electioneering and balloting for the printers of the two houses, and it was then that public officers began, as was stated in a report made to the Senate in July, 1842, "to cater for voluminous documents to satisfy the pampered appetite of the typographical epicure during the session, and to last during the recess, so that the victorious press be actively and effectively employed, without intermission, during the entire term for which the editor was elected, in default of which by Congress, they should not be surprised if held accountable for palpable breach of vested rights!"

The resolution of 1819 was so indefinite in its details that it enabled the congressional printers to reap large profits, and the printing of the House of Representatives, which had cost but \$17,000 a session during the preceding Congress, cost on an average about \$29,000 per session during the next ten years. The profits of these congressional printers were estimated at fifty-five per cent. by printers in their testimony subse-

former \$8,000, and the latter \$15,000, and the aggregate cost of the public printing, binding, and stationery is about \$65,000 a year, of which, probably, one-half is for printing. And this, it will be remembered, does not include the great variety and number of blanks executed elsewhere than at the seat of government, from copies furnished by the Departments of the Treasury, War, &c., and which might all be done here at a much less expense were a national printing office established.

"The committee are of the opinion that such an establishment, under the superintendence of a man of activity, integrity, and discretion, would be likely to produce promptitude, uniformity, accuracy, and elegance, in the execution of the public printing; and they are not certain that it would not, in the result, connecting with it a bindery and stationery, as already suggested, be found the most economical. But as the principle is somewhat novel, and the details would require some deliberation, the committee have not deemed it advisable at this late period of the session, and amidst the pressure which both houses experience from the accumulation of business important to the nation or interesting to individuals, to submit a proposition on which there would probably be a considerable diversity of opinion and consumption of time.

"3. Under all circumstances, the committee have deemed it their duty to recommend that a tariff of prices for every kind of printing required to be done for Congress be fixed by a joint resolution of the two houses, to continue in force for two years; and that before the close of the present session each house make choice, by ballot, of a printer to execute its own work during the next Congress. The prices should be adequate to the employment of sufficient capital and workmen to perform the work expeditiously, and to insure such care and attention as shall give it such a degree of accuracy and elegance as shall not dishonor the literature and typography of the country. With former contracts before us, and with the professional knowledge which may be called in aid, no difficulty would occur in forming the tariff alluded to, on principles at once liberal to the printer and advantageous to Congress; and in the selection of its printer, each house would doubtless take especial care to choose a man of capacity, probity, and responsibility. In addition to the bond and security to be required of them for the faithful performance of their obligations, a provision might be added that in case of any unreasonable delay, another person might be employed to do the work at such price as the Secretary or Clerk might be able to get it done for, and that the public printers should respectively be responsible for any difference between the sum allowed them and that which might be necessary to give him. The committee therefore submit the following resolution:

"Resolved, That the Joint Committee on Public Printing be instructed to report a resolution for carrying the foregoing proposition into effect."

quently given before a committee. Compositors were paid \$11 per week during the session, and \$10 per week during the recess, while those who worked "by the piece" averaged about \$10 50 per week.

The profits of the congressional printers were increased by the uncertain working of the resolution of 1819. The page of the then last edition of the Laws of the United States, including the marginal notes, was made the standard of size to which the congressional page should thereafter conform; but, instead of complying with this requisition, the testimony shows that the printers, during the period above referred to, *reduced* the page about one-seventh, or 14 per cent. In addition to this unwarranted reduction of the page, *bourgeois* type, (a larger description,) not named in the law, was used in composition and charged as *brevier*, by which the government lost at the rate of from 15 to 20 per cent. Title pages were also added to documents and reports, which, in the opinion of one of the witnesses, greatly enhanced the price of many of them, and to the cost of those under five pages it added at least 100 per cent. Broadsides, or tables printed on one side of the sheet, and folded into the document like a map, when the same might have been brought into an octavo page, were superadded to these expedients to swell the bills of the printer and increase the profits of his establishment.

In 1828 the evasions and infractions of the joint resolution of 1819 for the pecuniary profit of the congressional printers had become so apparent that a committee of the House of Representatives was charged with their investigation. After a careful examination they recommended the re-establishment of the standard which had been deviated from and they also made some excellent suggestions in their report. "Large documents," said the committee, "are directed to be printed, which, in fact, are altogether useless, and the evil is greatly increased when numerous copies are ordered, which, in many cases, swells the profit of the printer, without the smallest benefit to the country. The size of the public documents is unnecessarily large, which arises from a habit of prolixity and detail into which all the departments are more or less liable to fall; more especially as a new practice has been introduced by the Secretaries of the departments sending the reports of their clerks or heads of bureaux, instead of condensing them and making them their own communication. The committee recommend to the House the organization of a standing committee on printing, to which every document of over 100 pages communicated or reported to Congress shall be referred, that a report might be made on the necessity or propriety of printing it."

What was thus stamped as an abuse in 1828 has been steadily increasing down to the present day. Some bureau officers appear ambitious to win fame as book-makers, and keep numbers of clerks at work during the entire year in obtaining and preparing materials wherewith to swell the pages of their next annual communication to the head of their particular department. These communications were originally intended as memoranda, from which the Secretaries compiled their annual reports to the President, but now some of them eclipse—certainly in length—the reports to which they are appended. It is not essential that the public should be informed how many books of manuscript are filled, how many letters are received or written, or how many cases examined in a bureau, nor can those numbers give a definite idea of the actual labor performed. Neither should the head of a bureau utterly disregard the specific province of his labors, and invade other subjects entirely foreign to those committed to his charge, in quest of material wherewith to form a ponderous report. The committee believe that if the heads of the executive departments would exercise their legitimate authority, and only trans-

mit to Congress such portions of the reports of their subordinate chiefs of bureaus as relate to the public business transacted by those bureaus which is of a nature to merit publication, thousands of dollars can be annually saved, and the intrinsic value of the documents which accompany the message would be increased. Those who have had occasion to extend their researches among the printed documents of Congress to obtain statistical and other information will understand the force of this point, from having been wearied in tedious examinations, and not unfrequently baffled, after much loss of time, owing, in part, to the bulk or mass of useless matter that impedes their researches.

Towards the close of the administration of President John Quincy Adams, there was a warm contest for the public printing between Duff Green and Gales & Seaton. Mr. Benton stated in a subsequent speech that several ballotings took place, Mr. Green having a plurality of votes but not a majority of the whole. The *joint* resolution under which the Senate balloted (the resolution of 1819) expressly declared that a plurality should be sufficient; but the majority, on the eve of proceeding to the ballot, had passed a *single* resolution, to control the joint resolution, declaring that a majority of the whole should be necessary to a choice. The supporters of Mr. Green claimed the election; but the majority adhered to their *single* resolution, against the terms of the *joint* resolution, and refused to permit the election of Mr. Green to be declared. He, Mr. Benton, then moved that the ballotings should be discontinued. They were discontinued accordingly. No election of printer was declared. The session terminated without any further proceedings on the subject. The discussions of these questions occupied weeks of valuable time, and the debates show that the printing was regarded as a fund used by the party having the majority to aid in supporting its "organ."

Early in 1829, the great question of "printing patronage" was decided by the passage of a joint resolution providing "that within 30 days before the adjournment of every Congress, *each house* shall proceed to vote for a printer to execute its work for and during the preceding Congress, and the person having a majority of all the votes given shall be considered elected." This cemented the alliance between the congressional printing and partisan presses. The Globe, it was subsequently stated under oath by Mr. Duff Green, was established under a contract with a practical printer, who was to receive certain "patronage," one-third of the profits resulting from which was to be retained by him, while the remaining two-thirds were to be given to the editor, who was not required to furnish a dollar of capital. The prices of 1819 were retained, and those fortunate enough to be elected printers to the Senate or to the House used every exertion to have the quantity of printing increased, that their profits might be increased in proportion. No attempt appears to have been made, however, to improve the quality and consequent value of the voluminous productions issued as "Pub. Docs."

In 1840 Congress again investigated the cost of public printing, and a report was made to the House by its Committee on Printing, which contained a statement showing that the estimate profit of the printers employed during the previous seven years had been \$467,464 40, or an estimated annual profit of \$66,780 40. The committee were unanimous in endorsing the report, which had been made by the joint committee, that the establishment of a public printing office, under proper regulations, would produce elegance, despatch, and signal economy in the execution of the printing of the government.*

* The report of the committee sets forth that "the beneficial effects upon Congress by the establishment of an office to execute the public printing would be, among others:

"1. The immediate presentation to each branch, as soon as it should be organized, of all

Partisan politicians successfully opposed this movement in favor of the establishment of a government printing office, and they were equally successful in 1842, when another report was made advocating it, on the ground that an immense saving to the public treasury and the abatement of an extensive political evil would be the certain result.*

the messages, reports, and information from the President and the executive departments, in a form that would enable each to proceed to immediate action on them. All who have been members of either the Senate or the House know that it requires a considerable time to print the reports from the different departments after they are presented, and the action of Congress is consequently delayed for a week or more, at a daily average expense of more than \$3,500; thus saving at each session, at a moderate calculation, the sum of about \$25,000. Sometimes it has taken two days or more to elect a printer, which costs a large sum to the country. No one who has paid the slightest attention to the events of the present session of Congress will deny that the arrangements, delays, and difficulties preceding, and consequent upon, the election of printers to the House, have cost the country, in consequence of the time consumed, and what will be consumed hereafter in discussing the subject, at least \$20,000. How much more time has been, or will be, consumed in urging or resisting the printing of documents which inure only to the benefit of the printers, it is difficult to calculate, as is the increased expense to the community. We think we hazard nothing in saying that the amount of the salary of a competent superintendent for a national office would be saved annually in the expenditures of the House, caused by the election only of a public printer.

"2. The two branches of Congress would be deprived of a patronage, the exercise of which is attended with feelings not very creditable to the members or the country. Each party wishes to use it to sustain a political partisan and subserve party interests. The consequence is, there is always as great if not a greater rally of parties at the time of an election of printer than when the most important interests of the country are at stake. The intrigues, compromises, and imputations of improper and corrupt purposes and motives, are enough to sicken the heart of a patriot. We will not look into the history of the House further than during the last and present Congress; and what a spectacle does it present! Charges of fraud, corrupt combinations, and every foul purpose have been made. The characters of members are assailed in various forms, and the reputation which Congress should possess lowered, or entirely degraded, in the estimation of the people of this and other countries. The situation of printers to the Senate and House is held out and claimed as a reward for party services and political devotion. The evidence taken by the committee shows that the patronage which the executive departments formerly possessed was so used. Of the persons elected printers to either branch of Congress since 1819, none have been practical printers except Messrs. Gales & Seaton; all have been political partisans; and it is quite probable that the political opinions and services of those gentlemen have always had more influence than the fact of their being practically qualified for the station. We will not continue an enumeration of facts that are familiar to all."

*The report said: "To circumscribe and regulate the official patronage of the Executive, to exclude the several departments of the government, in the execution of their appropriate duties, from extraneous controlling influences, and, in fine, to separate them all from every possible means of accumulating forbidden and dangerous power, is manifestly among the first and most important duties of the national legislature, and from the performance of this duty there is no escape, without a direct violation of the most sacred moral obligation.

"A retrospective view of the operation of the joint resolution of 1819 presents a strong picture to the mind, if it does not convey an admonitory hint for the contemplation of statesmen. From the long continuance of this system, with its heavy burdens, it might be supposed that it resulted from a determination that the dominant party, in addition to possessing the patronage of the appointing power, should also be strengthened by immense largesses, in the form of governmental printing, to a party press; that such press is looked upon as a necessary appendage to sustain the power of the general government; and that the execution of the printing of Congress, although the ostensible object of the warmly contested elections of printers by the two houses, is merely incidental to the grand purpose of giving additional strength to the herculean arm of the victorious party.

"What are the facts presented by this retrospect? Canvassing; electioneering; attempts to involve individuals in interested political considerations; consumption of the time of Congress, in electioneering and balloting for the printers, and in catering for ample documents to satisfy the pampered appetite of the typographical epicure during the session, and to last during the recess, so that the victorious press be actively and effectively employed, without intermission, during the entire term for which its editor was elected, in default of which, by Congress, they should not be surprised if held accountable for *pulpable breach of vested right!*

"The contract mode, in addition to the strong objections which caused its discontinuance, is obnoxious to one of an insuperable nature, and one that has even been felt under the present system, which is that of keeping the printing in the hands of the conductors of party newspapers, whose columns may, at the same time, be teeming with vituperation and abuse of

During the summer of 1846 the public printing was again a subject of animated discussion in Congress, and in August a joint resolution was passed establishing the contract system, upon the idea that it would secure economy and prevent fraud. It was also asserted that this mode of having the public printing executed presented the largest field for competition. Experience demonstrated the fact that neither of these elements, upon which the system was founded in theory, worked well in practice, and the lesson thus learned should not be forgotten.

Economy was not secured, because the work, as the volumes of congressional documents will show, was wretchedly executed; and because it came to the Capitol so tardily that the subjects to which the printed matter related had either been disposed of before the printed matter was received, or had passed away from the attention of Congress for the want of the information the document was supposed to contain. Besides, those who secured the contracts by low bids were continually appealing to Congress for remuneration for alleged losses. The files of that period teem with memorials from Ritchie, Armstrong, Van Benthuysen, Hamilton, and other successful bidders, who appealed from the hardship of their contracts to the generosity of their political friends in Congress, and who were generally successful.

The idea that competition was also secured by the contract system also proved to have been fallacious. The public printing was divided into five classes by the advertisements, with a view that different bidders might propose for a part only, or for parts, or for the whole, as might suit their desire and their capital. Those who understood the character of the work possessed great advantage in making up their bids over printers who did not understand it. Such persons could bid for three classes, or for the whole, and by bidding low upon a class in which little is to be done, were able to secure a contract by reason of their average of the whole falling below the fair bidder for a single class who asked fair and living prices for that class. The same cunning enabled a bidder to obtain a single class, the proposals for which were to be so much for what was to be set up in one kind of type, and so much for what was to be set up in other kinds of type. The printer who, by the information so readily obtained from allies in the departments, knew the probable quantity of type to be used in the class for which he bid, would propose to set up for nothing per page in that size of type of which he had ascertained little would be required, and at a very high rate for that size in which he saw that much would be wanted, thus taking advantage, by the average, of the fair bidder, who looked to a compensation for whatever kind of type might be used, and bid accordingly. The like advantages were taken in the rates of press-work and whatever else

both houses of Congress, detracting, in the minds of the unsuspecting, from the moral power of the legal enactments, and presenting Congress in the attitude of the honest husbandman in the fable, who rescued the suffering adder, warming it in the bosom of his family, and was rewarded by the envenomed stings of the reptile.

“Evils of vast magnitude and alarming character, extending even to the most minute divisions of the body politic, corrupting its morals, and loosening, by licentiousness, the ties that bind the citizen to his country and its institutions, having existed under the systems heretofore pursued, the committee feel themselves imperiously called upon to express the opinion, that these evils are alone to be avoided by a total separation of the printing of the government from the newspaper press.

“Independently of the service to be rendered to the vital interests of the people the principle of economy, so essential in every branch of service in a republic, would be advanced in a most important degree by such separation, as it may be seen, on an examination of the subject, that the profits which have been realized on the public printing for the several departments of the government, during one printer's term, would have been sufficient for the erection of a printing office and the purchase of type and furniture sufficient for executing such printing for many years.”

appertained to what is truly called "the art and *mystery*" of printing. Congressional committees and public officers were bewildered with statements about ems and quads, small pica and nonpareil, rule and figure work, and other typographical technicalities, of which the Washington master printers took due advantage, while unfortunate bidders from other places who obtained contracts, and came here to execute them, were invariably losers. The contract system proved impracticable, and it also tended to swell the bulk of the bureau documents, by the collusions between the contractors and heads of some of the bureaus or the chief clerks thereof to increase the size of reports, add profitable "rule and figure work," and other devices for swelling the typographical profits.

In July, 1852, Congress found it imperatively necessary to change the manner in which its printing was done. The session had been commenced in December, yet only a few copies of the first and second parts of the President's message had been delivered by the contract-printers, and of the third volume not a single copy. After much debate an act was passed providing for the appointment of a Superintendent of Public Printing, who was to supervise the work executed by printers who were to be elected by the Senate and by the House of Representatives, and designated by the President, for the execution of the congressional and executive printing. The Superintendent was to give out the matter to be printed, to receive it when printed, to examine the work, and reject it when improperly executed, and to see that it was done with despatch. He was to be a disinterested supervising arbiter between the government and the public printers, but it was provided that, should he attempt oppression, he might be removed from office, or his decisions might be reviewed by the Joint Committee of Congress on Public Printing. He was to execute a bond for the faithful performance of duty in the sum of \$20,000, and it was provided that should he become interested in any contract relating to the furnishing of paper or relating to the printing, he might be fined, at the discretion of a jury, to the amount of \$10,000 and imprisoned in the penitentiary for five years. Paper was to be purchased by contract, awarded to the lowest bidders by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, and rates of prices were established for the payment of the public printers.

The public printing, thus placed under the charge of a Superintendent was executed with more promptness and in a far better manner than it had been under the contract system, but at a greater expense. The framers of the act had flattered themselves that they had provided all the guards and checks necessary to protect the public interest, but it soon became evident that the expenditures were enormous and exorbitant. Politicians who had no practical knowledge of printing were candidates for the places of printer to the Senate or to the House, and those who were elected farmed out the work to master printers at a percentage of the receipts. The majority in either house selected its candidate for printer in caucus, often after exciting contests, and with the positive understanding that when elected he was to devote large specified sums for partisan purposes. It appears in testimony taken by a congressional committee that the printers used portions of their receipts to aid in electing representatives who might in turn aid them, and partisan newspapers were sustained by regular dividends of public printing profits. For example, in the year 1858, the printing of the post office blanks was sub-let by the contractor (who was not a printer) to a printer who agreed to do the work for fifty-seven per cent., but who employed another printer to do it for about forty-five per cent. The profits on the job to the original contractor, at the rate of forty-three per cent., amounted, between January 1 and December 10 of that year, to \$15,165 26. Of this

the "Philadelphia Pennsylvanian," which belonged to this contractor, received \$9,707 28; the "Philadelphia Argus" received \$5,400; and complaint was made because little remained for the "Washington Constitution," which was to have received \$10,000.

Among other means resorted to for increasing the amounts which were thus divided as "patronage" among unscrupulous partisans, was the selection of the same master printer by the gentlemen who were elected printers to the Senate and to the House to do their work. The printer of each body received pay for the "composition" or type-setting of public documents, which was only executed once in the office of the master printer who did the work. Government had thus to pay twice for what was done once, and this item alone was the source of one hundred thousand dollars clear profit in four years. This embraced the thirty-third and the thirty-fourth Congresses, during which there were ordered some four hundred thousand volumes of quarto editions of works, the printing, engraving, paper and binding of which cost the government over \$2,000,000. The most expensive series of these works—the "Reports on the Pacific Railroad"—was originally ordered by the Senate, to be printed in octavo form, like any other public document. But the practiced eye of a printer experienced in congressional jobs saw the enormous increase of profit if the form of the page could be enlarged. A pretext was found in the necessity for inserting maps, which would not have to be so often folded when inserted in a quarto book as when inserted in an octavo book. The octavo volume, which had been placed on Senators' desks, was withdrawn and the work was printed in quarto. On ten volumes "double composition" was charged, and the consequent profits of the elected printers of the two houses was then estimated under oath, by the foreman of the master-printer who did the work, at from fifty-five to sixty per cent. On some jobs the profits were greater, as was demonstrated in 1852, when the master-printer who had been for some years executing the post office printing for the printer designated by the President, contracted to do it himself for ninety-three per cent. off the old price allowed, leaving seven cents on the dollar as compensation.

In 1860, Congress, having unsuccessfully endeavored to reform the public printing by different systems of employing individuals, fell back upon the recommendation made forty years before, and frequently since repeated, and established a government printing office. The annual reports of the head of this establishment show its efficiency and economy,* and it is not necessary here to eulogize either the promptness with which the public printing is executed, or the excellent mechanical execution of the work. The prices paid for labor, for materials and for presses and machinery have within the past few years greatly increased—often doubled—but the expense of congressional printing has not increased in proportion. The amount of printing and binding required for the departments has been greatly increased, and it will probably remain large so long as unlimited orders can be given for it, without accountability for extravagance, or responsibility for the legal right to make orders, but a careful estimate shows that a great saving has been effected. Computing the work done at the Government Printing Office from March, 1861, until September 30, 1865, at the prices paid under the previous system, it would have amounted to over one million of dollars more than the actual cost was.

The cost of labor has greatly increased since the Government Print-

* These annual reports give in detail "the cost of each and all documents annually printed for distribution," which it is consequently unnecessary to report here.

ing Office was established in March, 1861. At that time, and for several years previously, the wages of compositors and pressmen were fixed by the "Printers' Union" at \$14 per week; in February, 1863, they were raised to \$16 per week; in December, 1863, to \$18 per week; in June, 1864, to \$21 per week; in November, 1864, to \$24 per week; and in 1868 the passage of the eight-hour law increased the cost of labor one-fifth. The number of apprentices is virtually restricted by the trade regulations and usages, although it might be that a larger number of intelligent boys, from different sections of the country, could be so educated in the art and mystery of printing at the government office as to add to their usefulness to the community, while lessening the cost of the public work. Many females are employed at the government office who receive, on an average, about forty per cent. more wages than is paid for similar work in northern cities.

The amount of printing ordered by the executive departments and the judiciary has been gradually increased from \$144,355, during the first year after the establishment of the Government Printing Office, to \$429,442 during the last year. A large item of this increased expense is for the internal revenue bureau, the printing of which, for the last year, cost \$73,490 56, while the blank books, binding, ruling, &c., for the same bureau, cost \$39,889 25, making the total cost of the work done for this bureau \$113,379 82. It occurred to your committee that if each department was charged by the Congressional Printer with the amount of work done for it, and made to pay for the same out of its appropriations, it would be a check upon the extravagance of orders. But the Congressional Printer was decidedly of the opinion that this would lead to complications and make trouble without any corresponding benefit, for good reasons which he gave. It is, however, to be hoped that the heads of executive departments will not only scrutinize the orders given by their direction for printing and binding, but that they will have an editorial supervision exercised over the reports annually submitted by their subordinate bureau officers. The suppression of useless verbiage now printed will add greatly to the value of "public documents" and save thousands of dollars annually to the public treasury.

The expediency of discontinuing the distribution of all public documents except the register of congressional debates and the report of the Commissioner of Agriculture, is a subject worthy of the consideration of Congress. In Great Britain only one copy of each parliamentary document is supplied to each member, but they can be purchased at cost in the principal book-shops. For a quarter of a dollar one can purchase a folio "Blue Book" of a hundred pages or more, containing diplomatic or parliamentary information of the most valuable character. Large editions are not printed, yet it appears that the sale steadily reimburses the outlay for printing. During the last year of which the returns have been received here, (1866,) the amount of sales was £10,949 8s. 1d.

Congress, in June, 1864, inaugurated the sale of public documents by providing by law "that whenever any person may desire extra copies of any document printed at the Government Printing Office by authority of law, and shall notify the Superintendent of Public Printing of the number of copies desired previous to its being put to press, and shall pay in advance the estimated cost thereof to said Superintendent, the Superintendent shall be authorized, under the direction of the Joint Committee on Public Printing, to furnish such extra copies."

An "Army Register of Volunteers" was ordered to be printed in 1864, no copies of which were to be furnished to members of Congress or any other officials gratuitously, but it was directed that an edition of 50,000 copies should be printed, and that the work should be sold at cost. An

edition of 5,000 copies of the first four volumes was printed, but the work was so imperfect and full of errors that there was but little demand for it, and the edition of the residue of the volumes was reduced to 1,000. The total cost of printing the eight volumes of this "Army Register of Volunteers" has been \$37,803 77, but the total amount of sales has been 384 volumes, at \$1 a volume, making \$384. This experiment has not certainly been a successful one, but the blame lies with the compilers of the work, who had published at a heavy expense an imperfect and incorrect book.

The "Congressional Directory," published under the direction of the Joint Committee on Printing, costs, including every expense attendant on its compilation and publication, less than 16 cents a copy; large numbers have been sold, some senators and representatives purchasing hundreds of copies for distribution. Perhaps if equal attention was paid to the editing and compilation of other public documents there would be an equal demand for them, and their gratuitous distribution might be to a great extent discontinued; but the public can hardly be expected to purchase what not one citizen in a thousand ever reads, although distributed lavishly and sent over the Union free of expense. The committee will not now report any resolution on this branch of its investigations, but it invites attention to the facts which have been given.

THE REPORTING AND PUBLICATION OF DEBATES.

Congress, at its second session, voted down a proposition to supply the members with three copies each of a register of debates, made by the editor of a New York newspaper. The propriety of having the debates reported, however, was recognized, and in February, 1795, Hon. William Loughton Smith, a very able debater, afterwards minister to Portugal, reported a resolution, which was passed, directing the Secretary of State to receive proposals from stenographers for furnishing accurate reports.

In January, 1796, Mr. Smith introduced a resolution by the passage of which David Robertson, of Petersburg, Virginia, was appointed official reporter to Congress. It was stipulated that his annual salary should be \$4,000, in full for his services, clerk-hire, stationery, and all incidental expenses. Moreover, it was stipulated that if he furnished his manuscript to Andrew Brown, printer of the Philadelphia Gazette, for publication, Mr. Brown was to pay therefor \$1,100 of the salary, making the expense to be defrayed from the public treasury \$2,900.

On the removal of the seat of government from Philadelphia to Washington, Mr. Harrison Smith followed with his printing-office, and on the 31st of October, 1800, commenced the publication of the National Intelligencer, which gave an imperfect report of the proceedings of Congress. Mr. Smith used to write out his abbreviated notes and send them to the speakers, who would revise and correct them at their leisure. He was aided by Mr. Thomas Carpenter, who was a stenographer, and who was the first congressional reporter who could take down a debate with sufficient clearness to do justice to the merits of the different speakers.

The Senate did not, however, permit reporters to occupy seats on the floor of its chamber, and they were forced to sit in "an upper gallery, open to the admission of every one, and very remote from the floor," until the 5th of January, 1802, when Mr. Smith, requested permission to occupy a position where he could hear and report the debates with correctness. A resolution was offered granting this privilege, but it met with opposition from those senators agreeing with the legislators of Great Britain, who had ordered "that no news-letter writers do, in their letters

or other papers that they disperse, presume to intermeddle with the debates or other privileges of this house." Finding it impossible to exclude the reporter, the same senators endeavored to provide that he should give bonds in the sum of —, with two sufficient sureties, in the sum of — each for his good conduct," but this was voted down, yeas 16, nays 12. It was then, by the same majority of four, *Resolved*, Any stenographer or note-taker, desirous to take the debates of the Senate or legislative business may be admitted for that purpose at such place within the area of the Senate chamber, as the president shall allot.*

In 1807 Mr. Smith engaged the services of Mr. Joseph Gales, an excellent stenographer, who became a part owner of the National Intelligencer, and in 1810 purchased Mr. Smith's interest. Other papers had reporters at Washington, but the reports of the proceedings of Congress by the National Intelligencer were regarded as the most accurate, although they were often weeks in arrears.

In 1833 Mr. John C. Rives, then of the firm of Blair & Rives, publishers of the Washington Globe, conceived the idea of reporting and publishing the debates in Congress, and during the remainder of his life he labored to carry out this idea with an earnestness that merits commendation. Mr. Blair generously conceded to Mr. Rives all the credit which was afterwards attached to the conception and the prosecution of the work. When it was commenced there was not a single available shorthand writer in Washington, and the first number of the "Congressional Globe," which was published—as a weekly sheet—on the 7th of December, 1833, was simply a journal of the proceedings, in which was inserted the speeches of such members of Congress as were ambitious and industrious enough to write out their own remarks. Mr. Rives soon secured the services of W. E. Moore, a stenographer, the first member of the corps of Globe reporters, whose industry and fidelity can best be appreciated by those whose words they have incorporated into the history of the republic.

In 1845 the Senate Committee on the Library examined into the feasibility of having the debates published the morning after their delivery. They examined Mr. Gales, Mr. Rives, and others. In 1847 a bargain was concluded with Mr. Houston, a stenographic reporter, to furnish reports for the press. He was to print them on "slips," to be delivered to each senator, and commenced to do so with the session of 1847-'48. Before the session closed, he was several weeks behindhand with his reports, and the Senate finally paid him \$5,000 to give up his contract.

On the 7th of August, 1846, the Senate Committee on the Library made a report, providing for a daily report of the proceedings of each day on the morning of the following day, and a revised and corrected publication of the same debates in book form, to constitute a parliamentary record.† The editors of the National Intelligencer and of the Union agreed

* The National Intelligencer, of which Mr. Smith was the editor, published on the 8th of January the proceedings on the adoption of the above resolution, adding:—

On Wednesday, the editor had, accordingly, assigned to him a convenient place in the lower area, from which he took notes of the proceedings of the Senate.

On the adoption of this resolution, which opens a new door to public information, and which may be considered as the prelude to a more genuine sympathy between the Senate, and the people of the United States, than may have heretofore subsisted, by rendering each better acquainted with the other, we congratulate, without qualification, every friend to the true principles of our republican institutions.

† This report, which was evidently prepared after a careful investigation of the subject, said:

Impressed with a full sense of the importance and necessity of reporting and publishing the debates of Congress, and convinced that nothing less than the power of Congress (its power in point of authority and means) is adequate to this object, the committee of the two houses fully decided upon reporting a plan to their respective houses to place this business under the control and management of the two houses, each for itself. The principle being agreed in, the details became points of anxious inquiry. To accomplish the great object in view, two different degrees, or steps, in the publication became indispensable. First, a prompt pub-

to publish the debates in their respective papers, in accordance with a resolution passed, at \$7 50 a column. Subsequently the editors of the National Intelligencer and of the Union relinquished their contracts, and Mr. Rives then re-established the Daily Globe to publish the debates. It was understood by him that he was to receive the same price which had been paid the retiring contractors for reporting the debates and publishing them in the Daily Globe, so that members could read their remarks in print and correct them before they were permanently placed "on the record" in the Congressional Globe. Mr. Rives also understood that he was to have the privilege of supplying every new member of Congress with a complete set of the Congressional Globe, and that he was also to receive "one cent for every five pages excess over three thousand for a long, and fifteen hundred for a short, session."

Congress evidently agreed with Mr. Rives in his construction of the verbal understanding between its committees and himself for several years. But in 1856, on the passage of the bill changing the compensation of members, the purchase of complete sets of the Congressional Globe for new senators, representatives, and delegates was abrogated. In the opinion of Mr. Rives, (as expressed in a letter written under his direction just prior to his decease,) the furnishing of these back volumes of the Congressional Globe was as much a part of his agreement with Congress as was the furnishing of the current report of debates. He had the back numbers reprinted and stereotyped, erecting a fire-proof building for the reception of the stereotyped plates, and was always ready to furnish the back volumes, which he regarded it as his right to supply and to receive compensation for. His efforts during the 34th, 35th, 36th, and 37th Congresses to be permitted to carry out, in good faith, what he regarded as his part of the agreement proved unavailing, but he continued the work—to use his own words as dictated to his chief clerk—"in the belief that Congress would finally do him justice; would restore that which had been taken from him." But for this belief the reporting and printing of the debates by Mr. Rives would have ceased several years before his death.

In 1864 the increase in the rates of compensation to employés, the price of paper, &c., &c., at the commencement of the session, rendered it imperatively necessary for Mr. Rives to enter into some new arrangement for reporting and publishing the debates, and after informal consultation with the two committees on printing, he submitted two propositions, either one of which would be acceptable to him, namely:

The first proposition, which was adopted and enacted, was that Congress should "restore that feature of its agreement with him which was observed for eight years from its date, and abrogated without notice to him at the close of the 1st session 34th Congress, on the passage of the bill changing the compensation of members, which agreement provided for the purchase from him of a complete set of the Congressional Globe

lication of the debates of each day on the morning of the following day, and their immediate communication to the people in all parts of the United States. To do this required the columns of the daily press, and necessarily involved a running report of the debate, to be put to press most usually without revision or correction by the speaker. Secondly, a revised and corrected publication of the same debates in a durable book form, to constitute the authentic parliamentary history of Congress. Interviews with the practical men and proprietors of the large printing establishments in this city show that it can be done. The National Intelligencer and the Union each will undertake to report, print, publish, and circulate, through their exchanges and subscribers, the daily debates of Congress. Messrs. Blair & Rives will engage to continue their revised and corrected publication of the same debate in the book form in which it is now done. This is for the daily running debate, and which is to come out on the morning of each day after its delivery, and to appear, also, in the country edition of the paper. Speeches detained by members for correction and revision will appear in the daily papers at the first moment there is room for them without throwing out the current debate. In the Congressional Register they will appear in an appendix; but the whole running debate may be revised and corrected for prompt publication in the Register; and for that purpose the publisher of the daily reports will be required to deliver to each member a copy of the morning paper, that he may see how he is reported in each, and correct it immediately, if he chooses, and send it to the Congressional Register to take its permanent place in the book form.

for each new member who had not before received them." It also restored the additional compensation, paid by repeated acts of Congress in past years, of "one cent for every five pages exceeding 3,000 pages for a long session, or 1,500 pages for a short session, including the indexes and the laws of the United States for this and each future Congress." A proviso was added that this contract might be abrogated by either Congress or the proprietors of the Congressional Globe.*

An idea of the expenditure incurred by this proposition may be obtained by examining an official estimate of the amounts paid Messrs. Bailey & Rives, the present proprietors of the Congressional Globe, for reporting and publishing the debates of the 39th Congress, amounting in all to \$291,698 72†. In March, 1867, Congress gave the required notice that it would, in two years from the expiration of that session, abrogate the provisions of the 2d and 3d sections of the above-mentioned contract, and on the 20th of July, 1868, the entire contract was annulled by the enactment of the following section, added to an appropriation bill:

SECTION 3. *And be it further enacted*, That all acts or parts of acts authorizing the publication of the debates in Congress are hereby repealed from and after the fourth day of March next, and the Joint Committee on Printing is hereby authorized and required to invite proposals for the publication of the actual proceedings and debates in Congress, upon a plan and specifications to be previously published by them, and shall also ascertain the cost of such publication by the Superintendent of Public Printing, and shall report as soon as practicable such proposals and estimate of cost, together with a bill to provide for the publication of the debates and proceedings of Congress.

The Joint Committee on Public Printing, after a careful investigation of the subject thus indefinitely referred to them, determined to invite

*The second proposition, rejected by Congress, was in accordance with the expressed wish of a majority of the Senate's Committee on Printing, that an increased rate of payment, equivalent to the increased cost of publication, might be agreed upon. It was that Congress should "pay an advance of 50 per cent. on the prices now paid to the proprietor of the Globe for the work done by him for the two houses. This increase will make the price for reporting and printing the debates in the Daily Globe \$11 25 a column; and \$9 a copy for the Congressional Globe and Appendix for a long session, and \$4 50 a copy for a short session. This increase to date from the beginning of the current (38th) Congress."

† *Estimated cost of the Daily and Congressional Globe for the 39th Congress.*

Amount paid for reporting and publishing the proceedings of Congress in the Daily Globe, 8,869 ²⁶ / ₁₀₀ columns, at \$7 50 per column.....	\$66,520 89*
Amount of extra compensation paid 10 reporters, at \$1,600 each.....	16,000 00
Cost of the Daily Globe.....	82,520 89
Amount paid for 10,414 copies (in 5 volumes) of the Congressional Globe for 1st session.....	\$102,910 70*
Amount paid for 10,696 copies (in 3 volumes) of the Congressional Globe for 2d session.....	54,029 00*
	156,939 70*
[In addition to the above, about the sum of \$49,000* was paid to the publishers for complete sets of the back volumes of the Congressional Globe for new members of the 39th Congress.]	
Cost of binding 84,152 volumes of the Congressional Globe at the government bindery, at 52 cents per volume.....	43,759 04†
Cost of folding the same by Congressional Printer.....	8,479 09†
	52,238 13
Cost of the Congressional Globe.....	209,177 83
Cost of the Daily Globe brought down.....	82,520 89
Total cost.....	291,698 72

NOTE.—The sums marked * were furnished by the publishers of the Globe, and those marked thus † were furnished by the Congressional Printer.

proposals for the reporting and publication of the debates on the present plan. But they also invited propositions for reporting and for publication in any other form, that Congress might have the fullest possible information before authorizing a new contract.

The Joint Committee on Public Printing made it obligatory, however, that all proposals should embrace:

First. The furnishing of a corps of reporters for each house, acceptable to its Committee on Printing, and sufficiently large to report the debates promptly.

Second. The publication of the debates in a daily paper, to contain no political matter, to be issued in time to be sent from Washington by the earliest mails leaving on the morning of its publication—the proposition to state the kinds of type to be used, and the prices per thousand ems, including all changes, corrections, and additions to matter put into type; also the prices for the publication of written or printed matter not reported; and also the weight, size, and quality of the paper to be used. The proposal to state what the first five hundred copies of each number of the paper so printed will be furnished for, and what each additional copy will be furnished for.

Third. The transposition of the reports so printed into quarto form, without any extra charges for corrections, and the cost of printing this quarto edition on paper to be furnished by Congress, including dry-pressing and delivery for binding. The proposal to state what the first five hundred copies of each signature of the quarto edition so printed and dry-pressed will be furnished for, and what each additional copy will be furnished for.

Fourth. Persons making proposals will state whether or not they propose to make any additional charges for mailing the daily edition, messengers, indexing the quarto edition, waiting for copy, or any other service connected with the reporting and publication of the debates; and, if they do, to state what those charges will be, with the understanding that no claim will be made for remuneration or extra compensation in any shape beyond what is embraced in the proposals.

No proposal will be received unless accompanied with a bond with security to the approval of a United States judge or district attorney, in the penalty of \$25,000, that the bidder or bidders shall execute the work if the Joint Committee on Public Printing desire to make the contract with him or them, and each proposal must also be accompanied by satisfactory evidence that the person or persons making it can command the necessary facilities, and are practically acquainted with the business of publication.

The propositions received from the Congressional Printer and from individuals, in answer to the above invitation, will be laid before the Senate in a separate report from the Joint Committee on Printing, and legislation to secure the reporting and publication of debates will be asked for.

THE PUBLICATION OF THE LAWS.

The laws of the United States passed at the first session of Congress were ordered to be printed under the direction of the Secretary of the Senate, upon paper to be procured by him. The paper was accordingly ordered from Philadelphia and the laws were printed in New York. In 1795 this publication was transferred to the Department of State, but when the rebellion broke out there was such a demand for the consequent laws, especially those relating to the army and navy, that a resolution was passed in July, 1862, ordering an edition to be printed in pamphlet form, with a suitable index, for the use of the Senate. The House subsequently ordered copies of this edition, which has since been published in accordance with the following provision in the printing act approved July 25, 1864, amended by the act approved March 9, 1868.

SEC. 7. That from and after the passage of this act, it shall be the duty of the Secretary of State to furnish the Congressional Printer with correct copies of all laws and joint resolutions as soon as possible after their approval by the President of the United States, and that the Superintendent shall immediately cause to be printed, separately, the usual number for the use of the two houses of Congress; and, in addition thereto, he shall cause to be printed and bound, at the close of each session of Congress, three thousand copies thereof for the use of the Senate and ten thousand copies for the use of the House, with a complete alphabetical index, prepared under the direction of the Joint Committee on Public Printing.

The cost of this congressional edition of the laws for the 39th Congress, was \$15,033 59; and the publication the same laws separately, Rep. No. 247—2

for the use of Congress and the press, cost \$5,239 44. It is suggested by your committee whether the edition circulated by Congress of its own acts should not be that edition which, by law, is "declared to be competent evidence of the several public and private acts of Congress, and of the several treaties therein contained, in all the courts of law and equity, and of maritime jurisdiction, and in all the tribunals and public offices of the United States, and of the several States, without any further proof or authentication thereof."

The edition of the laws which is thus sanctioned is published by Little & Brown, of Boston. In 1845 this firm entered into a contract with the Attorney General, under the authority of an act of Congress, (introduced by Senator Choate, of Massachusetts,) for the publication of an edition of the laws and treaties of the United States, under certain conditions. The price to be paid for the work was not to exceed \$3 50 a volume for 1,000 copies and \$2 50 a volume for additional copies, and it was also stipulated that Messrs. Little & Brown "shall execute to the United States a conveyance of the stereotype plates from which the first copies shall be printed, for the purpose of printing the additional copies thereof, in such form that in whosoever hands the plates may be at any future and distant period of time the delivery of such additional copies to the United States may be effectually secured; they shall make immediate insurance on such plates, for the benefit of the United States and the proprietors of the plates, against loss by fire; and on the plates of the title page of each volume the interest of the United States in the plates as defined by this resolution shall be printed." Congress has since authorized the payment of an increased price for this edition of the Statutes at Large, which is purchased and distributed, in obedience to law, by the Secretary of the Interior.

Messrs. Little & Brown, thinking that their contract will be affected by the proposed codification of the laws, which will prevent them from selling back volumes, have petitioned the Senate to have the subject considered.

A pamphlet edition of the laws had been, as stated above, published at the close of every session of Congress, under the direction of the Secretary of State. In September, 1850, the Secretary was directed to contract with Little & Brown for the publication of an annual edition of the Statutes at Large, in place of the edition which had been published under his directions, 11,000 copies of which were to be delivered within 50 days after the adjournment of Congress, at the rate of 37½ cents per copy. The average amount of legislation was at that time equal to about 175 pages for a session, but the great increase of legislation after the rebellion commenced swelled the pamphlet to a volume of 592 pages for the first session of the 38th Congress. This, with the increased cost of labor, paper, and other materials used in the manufacture, compelled the publishers to apply to Congress for an increased compensation, which was given by resolution approved March 31, 1866. The cost of 22,000 copies of this edition, containing the acts and treaties of the two sessions of the 39th Congress, by the Secretary of State, was \$21,308 12.

The laws are also published in the Congressional Globe at a very considerable expense, making in all four distinct editions, three of which are dissimilar. When the laws shall have been codified, it may be advisable to have but one set of stereotype plates, from which editions may be published for sale, for government use, and for public distribution, on paper of different qualities.

The laws are also published in the newspapers. The act of Septem-

ber 15, 1789, creating the Department of State, made it the duty of the Secretary to cause each law and resolution passed by Congress and approved by the President, "to be published within at least three of the public newspapers to be published within the United States." This number was gradually increased by subsequent acts of Congress, and in 1828 it was stated in the report of a select committee instructed to inquire into this and other matters, that the Secretary of State had authorized the payment, during the previous year, of \$4,255 for the publication of the laws in eighteen newspapers. The newspapers published in Washington city had received for this publication \$380 each, an expenditure which the committee were satisfied "exceeded what ought to have been paid." The cost of the publication of the laws and treaties in the newspapers during the present fiscal year was estimated by the Secretary of State, (in a letter addressed to the Secretary of the Senate,) at \$100,000.

Your committee would suggest that much of this large item of expenditure, and of equally large sums paid for advertising for the departments, might be saved by making the daily publication of congressional debates an official gazette, in which all the official advertisements and announcements of the federal government should appear, and which should be sent to every officer of that government interested in such information. The plan has, your committee learn, been already put in practical operation under the auspices of the Post Office Department and of the Internal Revenue Bureau. The London Gazette, published by the British government, cost, for the year 1866, £9,093 11s. 4d., and its receipts from advertisements paid for by the public and from sales were £21,837 11s. 9d., leaving a profit of nearly thirteen thousand pounds sterling. The Edinburg Gazette yielded a profit during the same year of over three thousand six hundred pounds sterling, and the Dublin Gazette of nearly six hundred pounds sterling. The aggregate *profits* of public advertising in Great Britain for the year 1866 were £15,405 11s. 10d.

The sums now paid to newspapers in every section of the republic, although large in the aggregate, do not amount to much for each establishment, and the "patronage" is often more valued as a mark of consideration than because of its pecuniary profit. But it is questionable whether the dominant political party should thus aid those newspapers which only reflect its partisan views, instead of being mirrors of public opinion. The freedom and independence of the press is best maintained by the people, and their subscriptions are a more legitimate support than the "patronage" of the federal government.

The end of the present session of Congress is so near that the committee refrains from accompanying this report with any propositions for legislation; but it invites attention to the facts and the suggestions presented. During the next session a bill will be reported embodying several desirable reforms in the public printing.

