

Certain collectors and surveyors of customs may have certain duties remitted to them.

Ante, pp. 405, 411.

collector or surveyor of the customs has paid or accounted for, or is charged with duties accruing under the "Joint resolution to increase temporarily the duties on imports," approved April twenty-ninth, eighteen hundred and sixty-four, and in which the Secretary of the Treasury shall be satisfied that the collection of the said duties was omitted by such collector or surveyor, for the reason that he was not informed of the passage of said resolution when said duties accrued, the said Secretary be, and he is hereby, authorized, under such rules as he may prescribe, to remit or refund, as the case may require, such duties to such collector or surveyor.

APPROVED, February 14, 1865.

Feb. 17, 1865.

CHAP. XXXVII. — *An Act to authorize the Establishment of Ocean Mail-Steamservice between the United States and China.*

Proposals to be advertised for, for mail-steamship service between San Francisco and China and Japan.

Monthly trips.
Lowest responsible bidder to have contract for ten years.

Bids to be from citizens, and not to call for over \$500,000 a year, &c.

Sureties.

Contract, when to go into effect.

Provisions as to construction of the vessels.

Mail-agents.

Deductions for failures.

Fines for delays, &c.

Contract may be determined; when, &c.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Postmaster-General be, and he is hereby, authorized to invite proposals by public advertisement, for the period of sixty days, in one or more newspapers published in the cities of Washington, New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and San Francisco, respectively, for mail-steamship service between the port of San Francisco, in the United States, and some port or ports in the Chinese empire, touching at Honolulu, in the Sandwich Islands, and one or more ports in Japan, by means of a monthly line of first-class American sea-going steamships, to be of not less than three thousand tons burden each, and of sufficient number to perform twelve round trips per annum between said ports, and to contract with the lowest responsible bidder for said service for a term of not more than ten years, to commence from the day the first steamship of the proposed line shall depart from the port of San Francisco with the mails for China: *Provided*, That no bid shall be considered which shall amount to more than five hundred thousand dollars for the twelve round trips per annum, nor unless the same is from a citizen or citizens of the United States, and accompanied by an offer of good and sufficient sureties (also citizens of the United States) for the faithful performance of such contract.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That any contract which the Postmaster-General may execute, under the authority of this act, shall go into effect on or before the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-seven, and shall, in addition to the usual stipulations of ocean mail-steamship contracts, provide that the steamships accepted for the service shall be constructed of the best material and after approved models, with all the modern improvements adapted to sea-going steamships of the first class, and shall be subject to inspection and survey by an experienced naval constructor, to be detailed for that purpose by the Secretary of the Navy, whose report shall be made to the Postmaster-General. That the government of the United States shall be entitled to have transported, free of expense, on each and every steamer, a mail-agent, to take charge of and arrange the mail-matter, to whom suitable accommodation for that purpose shall be assigned. That in case of failure from any cause to perform any of the regular monthly voyages stipulated for in the contract, a pro rata deduction shall be made from the compensation on account of such omitted voyage or voyages. That suitable fines and penalties may be imposed for delays and irregularities in the performance of the service, and that the Postmaster-General shall have the power to determine the contract at any time in case of its being underlet or assigned to any other party.

APPROVED, February 17, 1865.