

conveying the mail, shall decline to sell and deliver to the United States such ship or ships, or shall refuse to name and appoint appraisers to value the same, agreeably to the provisions of said act, or the same having been appraised and valued, shall refuse to convey and deliver said ship or ships to the United States, on the payment, or tender of payment, by the United States, of the sum at which the said ship or ships may have been appraised and valued, such person or persons so offending shall forfeit a sum not exceeding one hundred thousand dollars, to be recovered in any proper action, for the use of the treasury of the United States; and in case of refusal or inability to pay the same, shall be liable to be imprisoned not exceeding one year, at the discretion of the court rendering judgment for such penalty.

Postmaster-General may impose fines on contractors for unreasonable or unnecessary delay, &c.

Proviso.

Contracts for foreign mail service not to be assignable.

Proviso.

SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted*, That to secure the regular transmission of the mail to and from foreign countries, the Postmaster-General be, and he is hereby, authorized and required to impose fines on contractors, for any unreasonable or unnecessary delay in the departure of such mails, or in the performance of the trip: *Provided*, That the fine for any one default shall not exceed one half of the contract price paid for the trip.

SEC. 5. *And be it further enacted*, That it shall not be lawful for any contractor for transporting the mail to any foreign country to assign or transfer his contracts; and all such assignments or transfers shall be null and void: *Provided*, That assignments and transfers which have been made and accepted by the Postmaster-General or the Secretary of the Navy before the passage of this act, shall not be affected by this section.

APPROVED, June 27, 1848.

June 28, 1848.

CHAP. LXXXII.—*An Act concerning the taking of official Oaths in the District of Columbia.*

Any one of the judges of the Circuit Court, or the judge of the Criminal Court, of the District of Columbia, may administer official oaths.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That all official oaths required by law to be taken by officers of the United States may, in the District of Columbia, be administered and certified by any one of the judges of the Circuit Court, or by the judge of the Criminal Court of the said District.

APPROVED, June 28, 1848.

June 28, 1848.

CHAP. LXXXIII.—*An Act respecting certain Surveys in the State of Florida.*

Certain islands, keys, and other lands in South Florida to be surveyed.

Expense of surveys limited.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That the commissioner of the General Land Office is hereby authorized and directed to cause to be surveyed, as soon as practicable, the islands and keys, and other lands in South Florida, interspersed with water, which cannot conveniently be connected with the regular public surveys; and also the private claims or grants which have been duly confirmed, situate in said State; and that such surveys of said islands, keys, and lands interspersed with water as aforesaid may be made by such persons on such terms, and in such mode and manner, as said commissioner may deem most expedient and proper, without connection thereof with the other public surveys, by township lines; but the expense thereof shall not exceed the maximum price per mile heretofore allowed for surveys by the United States in other States or Territories; and the surveys of said private claims or grants may be made by such persons, and on such terms, as said commissioner may deem most expedient and proper; but the expense thereof shall not in any case exceed twenty-