

LAWS
RELATING TO THE SERVICE
OF THE
POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,
PASSED BY

THE 32D CONGRESS AT ITS FIRST SESSION:

WITH
INSTRUCTIONS TO POSTMASTERS
FOR
CARRYING THEM INTO EFFECT.

WASHINGTON:
C. ALEXANDER, PRINTER,
F, NEAR SEVENTEENTH STREET.
1852.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,
20th September, 1852.

At the last session of Congress, certain laws were passed to *modify the existing rates of postage on printed matter*, provide additional means for detecting and preventing frauds on the revenue of the Department, and accomplish other important objects connected with its service. These laws—or so much of them as are deemed necessary for the purpose—are here published in a convenient form for the government of Postmasters in the performance of their duties, and for the information of the public. They are accompanied with such tables of postage and instructions to Postmasters, as seem necessary for carrying them uniformly into effect.

The annexed tables supersede the tables of postage on printed matter at pages 24 and 28 of the "Regulations" recently published, and the subjoined instructions modify and amend those "Regulations" from No. 121 to No. 145 inclusive. *See Laws and Regulations, Edition of 1852.*

LAWS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Passed during the First Session of the Thirty-second Congress.

AN ACT to amend the act entitled "An act to reduce and modify the rates of postage in the United States, and for other purposes," passed March third, eighteen hundred and fifty-one.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That from and after the thirtieth day of September, eighteen hundred and fifty-two, the postage upon all printed matter passing through the mail of the United States, instead of the rates now charged, shall be as follows, to wit: Each newspaper, periodical, unsealed circular, or other article of printed matter, not exceeding three ounces in weight, shall be sent to any part of the United States for one cent, and for every additional ounce, or fraction of an ounce, one cent additional shall be charged; and when the postage upon any newspaper or periodical is paid quarterly or yearly in advance at the office where the said periodical or newspaper is delivered, or is paid yearly or quarterly in advance at the office where the same is mailed, and evidence of such payment is furnished to the office

of delivery in such manner as the Post Office Department shall by general regulations prescribe, one half of said rates only shall be charged. Newspapers and periodicals not weighing over one ounce and a half, when circulated in the State where published, shall be charged one-half of the rates before mentioned: *Provided*, That small newspapers and periodicals, published monthly or oftener, and pamphlets not containing more than sixteen octavo pages each, when sent in single packages, weighing at least eight ounces, to one address, and prepaid by affixing postage stamps thereto, shall be charged only half of a cent for each ounce or fraction of an ounce, notwithstanding the postage calculated on each separate article of such package would exceed that amount. The postage on all transient matter shall be prepaid by stamps or otherwise, or shall be charged double the rates first above mentioned.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That books, bound or unbound, not weighing over four pounds, shall be deemed mailable matter, and shall be chargeable with postage at one cent an ounce for all distances under three thousand miles, and two cents an ounce for all distances over three thousand miles, to which fifty per cent. shall be added in all cases where the same may be sent without being prepaid, and all printed matter chargeable by weight shall be weighed when dry. The publishers of newspapers and periodicals may send to each other from their respective offices of publication free of postage one copy of each publication; and may also send to each actual subscriber, enclosed in their publications, bills and receipts for the same, free of postage. The publishers of weekly newspapers may send to each actual subscriber within the county where their papers are printed and published one copy thereof free of postage.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted*, That no newspaper, periodical, magazine, or other printed paper or matter, shall be entitled to be sent at the rates of postage in this act specified, unless the following conditions be observed:

First. It shall be sent without any cover or wrapper, or in a cover or wrapper open at the ends or sides, so that the character of the matter contained therein may be determined without removing such wrapper. *Second.* There shall be no word or communication printed on the same after its publication, or upon the cover or wrapper thereof, nor any writing or marks upon it, nor upon the cover or wrapper thereof, except the name and address of the person to whom it is to be sent. *Third.* There shall be no paper or other thing enclosed in or with such printed paper: and if these condi-

tions are not complied with, such printed matter shall be subject to letter postage; and all matter sent by mail from one part of the United States to another, the postage of which is not fixed by the provisions of this act, shall, unless the same be entitled to be sent free of postage, be charged with letter postage.

SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted,* That if the publisher of any periodical, after being three months previously notified that his publication is not taken out of the office to which it is sent for delivery, continue to forward such publication in the mail, the postmaster to whose office such publication is sent may dispose of the same for the postage, unless the publisher shall pay it; and whenever any printed matter of any description, received during one quarter of the fiscal year, shall have remained in the office without being called for during the whole of any succeeding quarter, the postmaster at such office shall sell the same, and credit the proceeds of such sale in his quarterly accounts, under such regulations and after such notice as the Post Office Department shall prescribe.

SEC. 5. *And be it further enacted,* That so much of the second section of the act entitled "An act to modify and reduce the rates of postage in the United States, and for other purposes," approved March third, eighteen hundred and fifty-one, as relates to the postage or free circulation or transmission of newspapers, periodicals, and other printed matter, and all other provisions of law inconsistent with the provisions of this act are hereby repealed.

SEC. 6. *And be it further enacted,* That when a list of uncalled-for letters shall be published in any newspaper printed in any foreign language, said list shall be published in such newspaper having the largest circulation within the range of delivery of said office.

Approved August 30, 1852.

INSTRUCTIONS.

RATES OF POSTAGE to be charged upon each *Newspaper, Periodical, Book, unstated Circular, and every other article of Printed Matter, transient or otherwise, from and after 30th September, 1852.*

When weighing at											
Over 6 ounces, and least 8 ounces.											
Over 7 ounces, and not over 8 ounces.											
Over 8 ounces, and not over 9 ounces.											
Cts.	Cts.	Cts.	Cts.	Cts.	Cts.	Cts.	Cts.	Cts.	Cts.	Cts.	Cts.
Each newspaper, periodical, unsealed circular, or other article of printed matter, (except books,) when sent to any part of the United States*.....	1	1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Transient newspapers, periodicals, &c., sent to any part of the United States, not prepaid.....	2	2	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18
Packages of small newspapers published monthly or often, and pamphlets not containing more than sixteen octavo pages, when sent to one address, in packages weighing at least eight ounces, and prepaid by postage stamps, †.....							4	4½	5	5½	6
Books, bound or unbound, not weighing over four pounds, for any distance under 3,000 miles, when prepaid.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
The same when not prepaid.....	1½	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13	15	18
The same for any distance over 3,000 miles, when prepaid.....	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
The same when not prepaid.....	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30	33
Over 1 ounce, and not over 2 ounces.											
Over 2 ounces, and not over 3 ounces.											
Over 3 ounces, and not over 4 ounces.											
Over 4 ounces, and not over 5 ounces.											
Over 5 ounces, and not over 6 ounces.											
Over 6 ounces, and not over 7 ounces.											
Over 7 ounces, and not over 8 ounces.											
Over 8 ounces, and not over 9 ounces.											
Over 9 ounces, and not over 10 ounces.											
Over 10 ounces, and not over 11 ounces.											
Over 11 ounces, and not over 12 ounces.											
Over 12 ounces, and not over 13 ounces.											
Over 13 ounces, and not over 14 ounces.											
Over 14 ounces, and not over 15 ounces.											
Over 15 ounces, and not over 16 ounces.											

* NOTES.—Each newspaper, or periodical not exceeding one ounce and a half in weight, when circulated in the States where published, is subject to a postage of one half cent only.
† **Newspapers, &c.,** when sent in packets of less than eight ounces, or to more than one address, must be rated separately.

DIRECTIONS.

1st. The weight of newspapers, periodicals, and other printed matter, must be taken or determined when they are in a dry state; and when the weight of any book or other publication exceeds one pound, the same progressive rates, above laid down, must be charged for the excess.

2d. Newspapers, periodicals, magazines, or any other printed paper or matter, must be sent without any covers or wrappers, or in covers or wrappers open at the ends or sides, so that the character of the matter contained therein may be determined without removing such wrappers.

3d. In case there is on or in any newspaper, periodical, pamphlet, or other printed matter or paper connected therewith, any manuscript of any kind by which information shall be asked for or communicated in writing, or by marks or signs, (except the bills and receipts of publishers, as provided by law,) or the directions herein prescribed are in any other respect not complied with, the same becomes subject to letter postage; and it is the duty of the postmaster to remove the wrappers or envelopes from all printed matter not charged with letter postage, for the purpose of ascertaining whether there is upon or connected with such printed matter, or in such package, any matter or thing which would authorize or require the charge of a higher rate of postage thereon.

It will be observed that except in respect to books, the postage on all printed matter to California and Oregon, is the same as to any other part of the United States.

RATES OF POSTAGE,

When paid quarterly or yearly in advance on Newspapers and Periodicals sent from the Office of Publication to actual subscribers, from and after the 30th of September, 1852.

	Daily.	Six times a week.	Tri-weekly.	Semi-weekly.	Weekly.	Semi-monthly.	Monthly.
	Cents.	Cents.	Cents.	Cents.	Cents.	Cents.	Cents.
Weekly newspapers (one copy only) sent by the publishers to actual subscribers within the county where printed and published.....						Free.	
Newspapers and periodicals, not exceeding $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounce in weight, when circulated in the State where published..	22 $\frac{1}{4}$	19 $\frac{1}{2}$	9 $\frac{1}{2}$	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 $\frac{1}{4}$	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Newspapers and periodicals, of the weight of 3 ounces and under, sent to any part of the United States.....	45 $\frac{1}{2}$	39	19 $\frac{1}{2}$	13	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	3	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Over 3 and not over 4 ounces.	91	78	39	26	13	6	3
Over 4 and not over 5 ounces.	1.36 $\frac{1}{2}$	1.17	58 $\frac{1}{2}$	39	19 $\frac{1}{2}$	9	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Over 5 and not over 6 ounces.	1.82	1.53	78	52	26	12	6
Over 6 and not over 7 ounces.	2.27 $\frac{1}{2}$	1.95	97 $\frac{1}{2}$	65	32 $\frac{1}{2}$	15	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
Over 7 and not over 8 ounces.	2.73	2.34	1.17	78	39	18	9

DIRECTIONS.

1st. When the weight of any publication exceeds eight ounces, the same progressive rate of postage laid down in the above table must be charged.

2d. Publishers of newspapers and periodicals may send to each other from their respective offices of publication, free of postage, one copy of each publication; and may also send to each actual subscriber, enclosed in their publications, bills and receipts for the same, free of postage.

3d. By a joint Resolution of Congress, (*see page 8,*) the Congressional Globe and Appendix may also be sent free through the mails so long as the same may be published by order of Congress.

4th. Postmasters are not entitled to receive newspapers free of postage under their franking privilege.

5th. If the publisher of any newspaper or periodical, after being three months previously notified that his publication is not taken

out of the office to which it is sent for delivery, continue to forward such publication in the mail, the postmaster to whose office such publication is sent will dispose of the same for the postage, unless the publisher shall pay it; and whenever any printed matter of any description, received during one quarter of the fiscal year, shall have remained in the office without being called for during the whole of any succeeding quarter, the postmaster at such office will sell the same and credit the proceeds of such sale in his quarterly accounts in the usual manner.

6th. Quarterly payments in advance may be made either at the mailing office or the office of delivery. When made at such mailing office, at the commencement of a year or of a quarter, (as he may elect,) the publisher must prepare and hand to the postmaster ready for signature, a receipt for each post office to which the papers are to be sent for delivery—stating the number of papers to be sent to such post office and the amount of postage to be paid thereon; also, giving the names of each of the subscribers. Upon the payment of the postage, the receipts must be signed by the postmaster at the mailing office. The publisher will then direct such receipts to the postmasters at the offices of delivery, and they will be received there as evidence that the postage has been duly paid.—To entitle them to pass *free* through the mails, such receipts must be left unsealed, endorsed “Post Office Business,” and directed to the postmaster at the office of delivery. The postmasters to whom such receipts have been sent, will be thereby authorized to deliver the papers mentioned in such receipts to the subscribers therein named without further charge for postage.

When periodicals are printed not oftener than once a quarter and are sent from the office of publication to actual subscribers, the amount of postage being marked thereon as pre-paid, at the mailing office, and the name of that office with the date of mailing being written or stamped thereon, will be sufficient evidence to warrant their delivery without further charge:—*Such periodicals may be prepaid by stamps.*

Joint Resolution providing for the distribution of the Laws of Congress and the Debates thereon.

With a view to the cheap circulation of the laws of Congress and the debates contributing to the true interpretation thereof, and to make free the communication between the representative and constituent bodies:

Be it Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of

the United States of America in Congress assembled, That from and after the present session of Congress, the Congressional Globe and appendix, which contain the laws and debates thereon, shall pass free through the mails so long as the same shall be published by order of Congress; *Provided,* That nothing herein shall be construed to authorize the circulation of the Daily Globe free of postage.

Approved, August 6th, 1852.

An act to establish certain post roads, and for other purposes.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That the Postmaster General be and he is hereby authorized to enter into a contract for the transportation of the United States mail on board of the steam vessels, which at present ply regularly between Boston, in the State of Massachusetts, and Halifax, in Nova Scotia, upon such terms as may appear to him reasonable: *Provided,* That the contracts authorized by this section shall be let to the lowest bidder according to the provisions of the existing laws: *And provided further,* That the amount paid shall in no case exceed the amount of postage derived from the said mails.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted,* That if any person shall steal, purloin, embezzle, or obtain by any false pretence, or shall aid or assist in stealing, purloining, embezzling, or obtaining by any false pretence, or shall knowingly and unlawfully make, forge, or counterfeit, or cause to be unlawfully made, forged, or counterfeited, or knowingly aid or assist in falsely and unlawfully making, forging, or counterfeiting any key suited to any lock which has been or shall be adopted for use by the Post Office Department of the United States, and which shall be in use on any of the mails or mail bags of the said Post Office Department, or shall have in his possession any such mail key or any such mail lock, with the intent unlawfully or improperly to use, sell, or otherwise dispose of the same, or cause the same to be unlawfully or improperly used, sold or otherwise disposed of, or who being employed in the manufacture of the locks or keys for the use of the said Post Office Department, whether as contractor or otherwise, shall deliver or cause to be delivered any finished or unfinished key or lock used or designed by the said Post Office Department, or the interior part of any such mail lock, to any person not duly authorized under the hand of the Postmaster General of the United States and the seal of the said Post Office Department to receive the same, (unless such person so receiving the same shall be the contractor for furnishing such locks and keys,

or engaged in the manufacture thereof in the manner authorized by the contract, or the agent for such manufacturer,) such persons so offending shall be deemed guilty of felony, and, on conviction thereof, shall be imprisoned for a period not exceeding ten years.

SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted,* That if any person shall steal, purloin, or embezzle any mail bags in use by or belonging to the Post Office Department of the United States, or any other property in use by or belonging to the said Post Office Department, or shall, for any lucre, gain, or convenience, appropriate any such property to his own, or any other than its proper use, or for any lucre or gain shall convey away any such property to the hindrance or detriment of the public service of the United States, the person so offending, his counsellors, aiders, and abettors (knowing of and privy to any offence aforesaid) shall, on conviction thereof, if the value of such property shall exceed twenty-five dollars, be deemed guilty of felony, and shall be imprisoned for a period not exceeding three years ; or if the value of such property shall be less than twenty-five dollars, shall be imprisoned not more than one year, or be fined not less than ten dollars, nor more than two hundred dollars for every such offence.

SEC. 5. *And be it further enacted,* That no collector or other officer of the customs shall permit any ship or vessel arriving within any port or collection district of the United States to make entry or break bulk until all letters on board the same shall be delivered into the post office at or nearest said port or place, nor until the captain or commander of such ship or vessel shall have signed and sworn to a declaration before such collector or officer of the customs, in the form and to the effect following, that is to say : "I, A. B., commander of the [state the name of the ship or vessel,] arriving from [state the place,] and now lying in the port of [state the name of the port,] do, as required by law, solemnly swear (or affirm as the case may be) that I have, to the best of my knowledge or belief, delivered, or caused to be delivered into the post office at or nearest said port, every letter and every bag, parcel, or package of letters that were on board the [state the name of the ship or vessel] during her last voyage, and that I have so delivered or caused to be delivered all such letters, bags, parcels, and packages as were in my possession or under my power or control." And the collector, and every officer of the customs at every port, without special instructions, and every special agent of the Post Office Department, when instructed by the Postmaster General to make examinations and seizures, shall carefully search every vessel for let-

ters which may be on board, or have been carried or transported contrary to law, and each and every of such officers and agents, and every marshal of the United States and his deputies, shall at all times have power to seize all letters, and packages, and parcels containing letters which shall have been sent or conveyed contrary to law on board any ship or vessel, or on or over any post route of the United States, and to convey such letters to the nearest post office, or may, if the Postmaster General and the Secretary of the Treasury shall so direct, detain the said letters or any part thereof until two months after the trial and final determination of all suits and proceedings which may at any time within six months after such seizure be brought against any person for sending, or carrying, or transporting any such letter contrary to any provisions of any act of Congress; and one-half of any penalties that may be recovered for the illegal sending, carrying, or transportation of any such letters shall be paid to the officer so seizing, and the other half to the use of the Post Office Department; and every package or parcel so seized, in which any letter shall be concealed, shall be forfeited to the United States, and the same proceedings may be had to enforce such forfeiture as are authorized in respect to goods, wares, and merchandize forfeited by reason of any violation of the revenue laws of the United States; and all laws for the benefit and protection of officers of the customs seizing goods, wares, or merchandise for a violation of any revenue law of the United States shall apply to the officers and agents making seizures by virtue of this act.

SEC. 6. *And be it further enacted*, That the Postmaster General may from time to time, by and with the advice and consent of the President, make any arrangements which may be deemed just and expedient for allowing the mails of Canada, or of any other Province, State, or country adjoining the United States, to be carried or transported at the expense of the Province, State, or country to which such mails belong, over any part or portion of the territory of the United States, from one point in the Province, State, or country to which such mails belong, to any other point in the same, upon obtaining the same privileges for the transportation of the mails of the United States through the Province, State, or country to which such privileges shall be granted: *Provided*, That such privileges may at any time be annulled by the President of the United States, or by joint resolution of the two Houses of Congress, from and after the expiration of one month next succeeding the day on which the notice of the act of the President or of the

joint resolution of the two Houses shall be given to the chief executive officer or head of the Post Office Department of the Province, State, or country whose privilege is to be thereby annulled.

SEC. 7. *And be it further enacted,* That every mail, of any Province, State, or country having the privilege authorized to be granted in and by the next preceding section, shall, while in the territories of the United States, be deemed and taken to be a mail of the United States, so far as to make any violation thereof, any depredation thereon, or any act or offence in respect thereto, or any part thereof, which would be punishable under the existing laws of the United States, in case the same had been a mail or part of a mail of the United States, an offence of the same grade, and punishable in the same manner, and to the same extent, as though the said mails were those of the United States; and in any indictment for such act or offence, the said mails or any part thereof may be alleged to be, and on the trial of any such indictment they shall be, deemed and held to be mails or parts of mails of the United States.

SEC. 8. *And be it further enacted,* That the Postmaster General shall be, and he is hereby authorized to provide and furnish to all postmasters and other persons applying and paying therefor suitable letter envelopes, with such water marks or other guards against counterfeits as he may deem expedient, and with one or more suitable postage stamps, with such device and of such denominations and value as he may direct, printed or impressed thereon, which envelopes shall be sold at the cost of procuring and furnishing the same, as near as may be, with the addition of the value or denomination of the postage stamps so printed or impressed thereon or attached thereto as aforesaid; and letters, when enclosed in such envelope, with postage stamps printed or impressed thereon, (the postage stamp or stamps in every such case being of the value, denomination, or amount required to prepay the postage which would be chargeable on such letters and envelopes if sent by mail to the place of their destination under the provisions of the laws then in force, and such stamps and envelopes not having been before used,) shall pass in the mails as prepaid letters; and all letters enclosed in such envelopes as shall be provided and furnished by the Postmaster General, as first in this section prescribed, and with postage stamps thereon as aforesaid, (and such postage stamps on such envelopes being equal in value and amount to the rates of postage to which such letters would be liable if sent by mail; and such postage stamps and envelopes not having been before used,) may be sent, conveyed, and delivered otherwise than by post or

mail, notwithstanding any prohibition thereof under any existing law: *Provided*, That the said envelope shall be duly sealed, or otherwise firmly and securely closed, so that such letter cannot be taken therefrom without tearing or destroying such envelope; and the same duly directed and addressed, and the date of such letter, or the receipt or transmission thereof, to be written or stamped, or otherwise appear on such envelope.

SEC. 9. *And be it further enacted*, That the Auditor of the Treasury, for the Post Office Department, may, under such regulations and restrictions as the Postmaster General shall prescribe, allow to every postmaster, whose office was not established until after the first day of July, one thousand eight hundred and fifty, or whose commissions in consequence of the increase of labor and business at his office, shall have equalled or exceeded the commissions allowed at such office, for the year ending on the thirtieth day of June, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-one, such compensation, in addition to his legal commissions, as will in the judgment of such auditor make the compensation of such postmaster equal, as near as may be, to the compensation of other postmasters in the same section of the country whose labors are the same as his, and who are entitled to an additional allowance under the sixth section of the act entitled "An act to reduce and modify the rates of postage in the United States, and for other purposes," approved March third, eighteen hundred and fifty-one, and under orders of the Postmaster General, made in pursuance of the provisions of said sixth section of the act aforesaid.

SEC. 10. *And be it further enacted*, That all fines and penalties imposed for any violation of any law relating to the Post Office Department shall, when collected or recovered, be paid into the treasury to the credit of the United States for the use of the Post Office Department, excepting, however, such part thereof as may by law belong to the party informing or prosecuting for the same.

SEC. 11. *And be it further enacted*, That it shall be the duty of the Postmaster General to issue proposals and contract for the transportation of a daily mail between Louisville and Cairo, St. Louis and Cairo, Cairo and Memphis, and Memphis and New Orleans, and to supply such intermediate points as he may order from time to time on suitable and safe steamboats.

Approved, August 31, 1852.

REGULATIONS.

The law having made it felony, to steal or to counterfeit any key suited to any lock which has been, or shall be adopted for use upon the mails of the United States; or to steal, embezzle, unlawfully use, or dispose of any such lock, or any mail bags in use by, or belonging to the United States; it becomes the duty of postmasters, and all other agents of this Department, to see that the penalties of these provisions of law are enforced in every case of their violation.

The attention of postmasters is especially directed to the suppression of a prevailing abuse in respect to canvas mail bags.

It is known to the Department that upon horse and coach routes, many of these bags designed for newspaper mails, and without locks, have been illegally withdrawn from the service of the Department, and applied to the uses of contractors or their drivers, for the conveyance of grain, or for other private purposes; and that many of them have been sold, or otherwise disposed of. Wherever this abuse is known to have been practised, postmasters should notify every person implicated in it, that if he shall hereafter steal, purloin, embezzle, or convert to his own use any mail bags or other property belonging to the Post Office Department, he will thereby render himself liable to imprisonment for a period extending to one or three years according to the amount of the embezzlement, and to a fine not exceeding two hundred dollars.

Congress having by the 5th Section of the foregoing act authorized the *seizure and detention* of all letters, or packages containing letters which shall have been sent or conveyed contrary to law, on board any ship or vessel, or on or over any post route of the United States, it is the duty of postmasters and other agents of this Department to cause this provision of the law to be enforced.

Whenever a Postmaster receives information, or has good reason to believe that letters are illegally brought to, or sent from any city, town, landing, station, or place near his office, whether by steamboat, railroad, or any other mode of conveyance, he will give immediate notice of such violation of law to the collector of the district, or some other officer of the customs, if such letters are on board a ship or other vessel, or to a special agent of this Department, or a marshal, or deputy marshal of the United States, if the same have been sent or conveyed *either by sea or land*; and it will be the duty of such collector, custom-house officer, special agent, marshal or deputy marshal to *search for and seize* all such letters and convey them to the nearest Post Office, or detain them until after the trial of any suit which may grow out of such seizure, **as the Postmaster General, and the Secretary of the Treasury may**

direct, and one half of any penalties that may be recovered for illegal sending carrying or transporting any such letters shall be paid to the officer so seizing.

In every case where a postmaster has reason to believe that the law is violated in this manner near his office, and no officer authorized to seize letters illegally carried resides in the vicinity, he will apply to the Postmaster General for an appointment as special agent for the purpose—stating fully the facts which in his judgment render such appointment necessary.

The act of 1845 prohibits the carrying of mailable matter by private express, and imposes a fine of \$150 for each offence upon the person who may *establish* such express, and upon each person *acting* as such express, or *aiding* and *assisting* therein. It imposes the same fine upon the owner of any stage coach, railroad car, steamboat, or other vehicle, or vessel, making regular trips at stated periods, and carrying—with the knowledge or consent of such owner, or of the captain, conductor, driver, or other person in charge of such vehicle or vessel—any person acting or employed as such express. It prohibits the conveyance of mailable matter otherwise than in the mails, by the owners, managers, conductors, crews, or servants of any vehicle, or vessel, making stated trips as aforesaid, under a penalty of \$100 to be paid by the owner, and \$50 to be paid by the captain, conductor, driver, or other person having charge of such vehicle or vessel, for each offence.

By the 8th section of the foregoing act, the Postmaster General is authorized to provide and furnish to Postmasters, and other persons applying therefor, suitable *letter envelopes* with postage stamps thereon for prepayment of postage; and by the same section it is provided that letters inclosed in such envelopes with postage stamps thereon of a value equal to the postage which would be chargeable upon such letters and envelopes if the same were conveyed in the mails of the United States, “*may be sent, conveyed, and delivered otherwise than by post or mail.*” The envelopes here authorized are soon to be prepared and distributed, with suitable instructions, and will furnish to the public the means of sending letters over all the post routes of the United States by private expresses, or other private means, without defrauding the revenue of this Department—leaving no color of excuse to persons who may still attempt to violate the law by sending letters otherwise than by mail, without the protection of such envelopes. It is expected by the Postmaster General that each Postmaster will give notice in his neighborhood that after such envelopes shall have been furnished to Postmasters for sale, and have in that way been placed within

reach of all persons desirous of purchasing them, the law authorizing *search for and seizure of all letters illegally carried will be rigidly enforced.*

It is known to the Department that upon many of the principal lines of travel and commercial intercourse by steamboat and railroads—and especially on those where frequent trips are made by public conveyances other than those carrying the mails—large quantities of mailable matter have been illegally conveyed by private expresses, and by the captains, managers, agents and conductors, of the vessels and vehicles employed on these lines; and that large sums have in this way been diverted from the revenues of the Department. As Congress has now provided convenient means for the lawful conveyance of letters *both in and out of the mails*, and has at the same time imposed additional restraints upon the unlawful conveyance of mailable matter, it is confidently expected by the Postmaster General, that the existing abuses from this cause will be abated: to this end postmasters should keep themselves supplied with postage envelopes for the accommodation of the public in their several neighborhoods, and should diffuse as widely as possible a knowledge of the law and its penalties, that public opinion may be directed to the subject, and the agents of the Department assisted in protecting its revenues.

That the experiment of *cheap postage* may be fairly and successfully tried, it is indispensable that not only postmasters, Post Office agents, and the law officers of the Government, but the business community and all influential citizens should unite in vindicating the law.

Under the provisions of the 9th section of the foregoing act every Postmaster whose office was not established until after the first day of July, 1850, or whose commissions in consequence of the increase of labor and business at his office, shall have exceeded the commissions at such office, for the year ending the 30th of June, 1851, will be allowed such compensation in addition to his legal commissions, as will in the judgment of the auditor for the Post Office Department, make the compensation of such Postmaster equal (or as near as may be) to the compensation of other Postmasters in the same section of the country whose labors are the same as his.

The data for the allowance of said additional compensation will be ascertained in the auditor's office, by examining and comparing such Postmaster's accounts with the accounts of other Postmasters in the same section of country engaged in the performance of similar service.

S. D. HUBBARD, *Postmaster General.*