

Provision should be made for the clerical force rendered necessary by the increasing correspondence and duties relating to these important works, and other incidental expenses that must unavoidably be incurred, for which an estimate has been submitted.

CAPITOL AND LIBRARY EXTENSION, AND GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.

The report of the architect of the Capitol extension furnishes full information concerning the condition and progress of the work. Since the report of his predecessor, the eastern portico of the south wing, including the steps and carriage ways to the same, has been completed, with the exception of the caps of the cheek blocks, delayed for the want of marble of the requisite dimensions. One of these has been finished, and eleven pieces of marble for the others are now on the grounds.

The greater part of the marble work for the north portico has been prepared during the present season, and this portion of the work is now completed. Seventy-three blocks for cornice, architraves, &c., and nine monolithic columns have been prepared for the unfinished porticos. Some years since the government acceded to an interpretation of the contract, insisted on by the contractors, which allowed them to furnish marble of such dimensions as to require two pieces in the construction of each column. There is on hand material for eight columns of that description. The architect recommends that they be placed alternately with monolithic columns in the western porticos.

Congress, at its last session, made no appropriation for this work, and the architect estimates that a hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars (\$175,000) will be required to continue it during the present fiscal year, and two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1867.

Attention is invited to that part of the report which relates to the necessity of extending the central building and portico to the line of the porticos of the wings, and of enlarging the Capitol grounds. The architect recommends that the plans prepared for these purposes by his predecessor be adopted and carried into effect.

The arrangements for lighting the new dome, by Gardner's electro-magnetic apparatus, are in progress. A further appropriation is necessary for the completion of the dome, which is now nearly finished, and to discharge existing liabilities for work already done upon it.

An act of last session authorized "an enlargement of the library of Congress, so as to include in two wings, built fire-proof, the space at either end of the present library." The then architect of the Capitol extension prepared the requisite plans and specifications for the work. Competition was invited by newspaper publication in several of the large cities of the Union, and a contract for the labor and materials awarded to a responsible party for the sum of one hundred and forty-six thousand dollars, being fourteen thousand less than that appropriated by Congress. The work, although delayed by unforeseen causes, has been faithfully and successfully prosecuted, and its completion will not be long deferred. Additional expenditure must be incurred for the introduction of water into the library, the cutting off and replacing the gas mains which supplied the

building and passed through the wings which will be occupied by the library, and other incidental alterations which were not anticipated and specified by the architect, but which, as the work progresses, are found to be necessary.

After a suspension of nearly four years, the work on the north portico of the Interior Department has been resumed under a contract made in the year 1857. The price of labor and materials during the intervening period had so largely increased as, in the opinion of the architect, to render the contract entirely unremunerative. I therefore gave the contractors the option of abandoning the contract, or prosecuting the work at the rate it prescribes. An estimate has been submitted of the amount requisite to finish the portico, iron fence and pavement.

The saloon of the north front of the department has been appropriated for the use of the Patent Office, and fitted up with cases. They are designed for the exhibition and safe-keeping of models, and are of the most approved materials and workmanship. An appropriation is necessary to meet outstanding accounts and to complete the saloon.

The Government Printing Office has been enlarged and extended agreeably to an act of the last Congress making provision for that purpose, and for capacity and convenience is believed to be now unsurpassed by any similar establishment in the country.

DISTRICT AFFAIRS.

The power conferred on Congress of exclusive legislation for the District of Columbia imposes the corresponding duty of making just and adequate provision for its welfare. Its local interests, so liable to be overlooked in the midst of subjects of more general and engrossing concern, fall to some extent within the province of this department, and require a special allusion.

The annual report of the Commissioner of Public Buildings gives a detailed account of the expenditures authorized by Congress within this District. I have also received a communication from the mayor of the city of Washington, which I have directed to be printed. These papers present important facts and considerations which merit the attention of the legislative department.

The controlling object in the original design of this city was the accommodation of the public interests which it was anticipated would cluster about the capital of a great nation. Accordingly, only three thousand and sixteen of the seven thousand one hundred and thirty-four acres composing its entire area were surveyed into lots for sale to individuals. The remainder embraces streets, avenues of inordinate width, squares, circles, and public reservations. By the adoption of this design, it is manifest that it was not intended that the sparse population thus provided for should bear the burden of the entire cost of the local improvements, required more for the national convenience than for that of the permanent residents. At the last assessment the national government owned real estate within the city limits to the value of \$28,121,631 45—a sum nearly equal to the estimated worth of all individual property in the city. At the usual rate of taxation this property would yield a revenue of \$210,912 23.

The mayor suggests that such a tax, in connexion with the present resources, would yield a revenue amply sufficient to support the municipal government, improve the streets and avenues, make proper provision for the indigent, and maintain a complete system of public schools.

In the year 1820 Congress provided that from the proceeds of the sale of public lots reimbursement should be made to the city of Washington of an equitable proportion of the expenses thereafter incurred in laying open, paving, and otherwise improving the streets and avenues adjacent to the public squares and reservations. I am informed that, since the passage of this act, three thousand seven hundred and twenty-five lots of this class have been sold, and the proceeds paid into the treasury of the United States, while no reimbursement has been made to the city for the sum of thirty-seven thousand four hundred and ten dollars and sixty-one cents paid for improvements properly chargeable to this fund. An appropriation should be made for refunding this amount and the interest which has accrued thereon. During the past summer and fall the improvement of streets adjacent to public property has rendered the government liable to a considerable amount, and an additional sum will be needed to meet similar expenses which will probably be incurred during the next fiscal year. It is hoped that Congress will at an early date make provision to meet these liabilities. Several of the streets of Washington have been paved in a neat and substantial manner since the adjournment of Congress, and the municipal authorities are making like improvements upon other streets, which will add greatly both to their beauty and their utility as public thoroughfares. It is submitted that Congress should encourage this spirit by corresponding improvements upon the avenues. The Commissioner of Public Buildings refers to the dilapidated condition of the pavement on Pennsylvania avenue, and recommends that an appropriation be made by Congress for the substitution of either the Belgian or the Nicholson pavement throughout its length, and also for the opening and grading of such of the remaining avenues leading to the Capitol as remain closed. These avenues are under the exclusive control of Congress, and justice seems imperatively to require that the national government should defray the expense of paving and keeping them in repair. If the burden of paving the avenues, as well as the streets, is to be thrown upon the owners of contiguous property, the mayor suggests that the law be so amended as to reduce the width of the carriage-ways, and that the intervening space between them and the pavement be flanked with a line of curbstones, sodded, and planted with ornamental shade trees.

I recommend that the law authorizing a local tax for sewerage be so amended as to enable the city to levy the same equitably upon all property benefited by such improvement. A general system of sewerage should at once be adopted by the city, the expense of which should be borne in part by the government.

I invite the attention of Congress to the views of the mayor touching the locality occupied by the Centre market. For a long time this space has been disfigured by dilapidated and unsightly sheds and stalls, called a "Market House." The city, in the belief that it was authorized to appropriate the ground, made efforts to replace these by a commodious building of correct

architectural proportions, properly furnished for the public accommodation. Its erection had been commenced, but the work was suspended in compliance with the supposed requirements of a joint resolution, approved June 30, 1864, authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to reclaim and preserve certain property of the United States. I commend the subject to your consideration, with a view to such legislation as the convenience of the city and the interests of the public require.

The mayor's communication also calls attention to the fact that the youths of the District are largely in excess of the accommodation which can be furnished them in the public schools. No doubt many of them are receiving education in private institutions; but it is feared that many are absolutely destitute of the means of instruction. All experience demonstrates that virtue and thrift are the natural results of education, while pauperism, vice, and crime are the legitimate fruits of ignorance; and that it is more economical to maintain schools as a preventive, than to support the pauperism and punish the crime that ignorance engenders. From the establishment of the national capital in the District of Columbia, the expenses incident to such support and punishment have been paid by the government of the United States. It is worthy of serious consideration, therefore, whether a just proportion of the expense of the public schools in this District should not be provided for from the same source; and it is believed that Congress will thus be able to diminish the expenditures from the judiciary fund far more than they will be expected to augment the educational fund of this District. The propriety of this provision is still further shown by the consideration of the fact that a large proportion of the people of this District are in the service of the United States, on small salaries, and regard themselves as transient inhabitants. If possessed of property, it is generally located elsewhere, and the taxes levied upon it are applied to the support of the institutions of those localities, while their children live in this District, and, if educated in the public schools, swell the tax to be levied on the property of permanent citizens. The number of transient and non-tax-paying persons has been largely increased during the war by the ingress of multitudes of both white and colored people who have fled from its perils and desolations. Justice as well as economy demands that provision be made from the national treasury for the education of the children of these classes.

The canal leading from the Potomac river, through the heart of the capital, to the Eastern branch, has been made the receptacle of the filth and offal from all the sewerage of the city. It has thus become a loathsome cesspool, fruitful of disease, and inviting pestilence. The city authorities can exercise no legal control over it, as it is bordered almost exclusively by government reservations. These are deteriorating in value on account of this constantly increasing and almost insufferable nuisance. It is nearly useless for navigation, by reason of accumulations within it; and it should either be deepened and improved for the passage of shipping, or at once abandoned as a canal. In the latter alternative, it should be diminished in width to suitable dimensions, arched over, and used exclusively as a main sewer. The proceeds of the land

thus reclaimed, if brought into market, would defray a large proportion of the expense occasioned by the change. This nuisance lies almost at the threshold of the Capitol, the Executive Mansion, and other costly public edifices. If Congress should refuse to provide the requisite means for its improvement in the mode which I have suggested, exclusive authority over it should be conferred upon the city of Washington.

The report of the Commissioner of Public Buildings refers to the neglected condition of many of the triangular and circular public reservations. Instead of being abandoned to the public, they should be neatly and substantially enclosed, and planted with trees and shrubbery. The reservation on East Capitol street, between Eleventh and Thirteenth streets east, should be thus improved.

By the act approved May 25, 1832, the Commissioner of Public Buildings was authorized to purchase a tract of land surrounding a large and never-failing spring of the purest water, including the rights of individuals to its use, and to bring it in pipes, a distance of about two miles, to the Capitol, at a cost of forty thousand dollars. From that spring comes the flow of water which fills the fountains directly east and west of the Capitol building, and also the flow of the hydrant in front of the arched entrance to the basement of the west front; and from it is supplied all the drinking-water used in the Capitol. If the use of this water is to be continued, so much of the land on which the spring is situated as belongs to the United States should be properly secured by a substantial fence.

METROPOLITAN POLICE.

The board of police for this District, constituted by an act approved August 6, 1861, employed during the last fiscal year, as a permanent force, one superintendent, six detectives, ten sergeants, and one hundred and fifty patrolmen.

The detectives made seven hundred and seventeen arrests. Seven hundred and seven robberies were reported at the detective office. Property to the value of one hundred and seventy thousand six hundred and fifty-nine dollars and nine cents (\$170,659 09) was reported as stolen; of which one hundred and twenty-two thousand eight hundred dollars and six cents (\$122,800 06) was recovered by the officers. Property valued at six thousand eight hundred and ninety-four dollars and twenty-two cents (\$6,894 22) was turned over to the property clerk, while the value of that delivered to claimants was one hundred and fifteen thousand nine hundred and five dollars and eighty-four cents, (\$115,905 84,) and that taken from prisoners and returned to them, four thousand nine hundred and forty-two dollars and fifteen cents, (\$4,942 15.) These results indicate but a portion of the actual work performed. The services of detectives are often of great value in the prevention of crime by known offenders, who, on their arrival, are placed under a strict surveillance, or are taken into custody, before they have an opportunity to accomplish their evil designs.

The members of the police constituting the sanitary company have been efficiently employed in the abatement of nuisances, and in the discharge of other duties specially assigned to them.

The whole number of arrests during the year was twenty-six thousand four hundred and seventy-eight. Of the parties arrested, eighteen thousand five hundred and sixty-seven were charged with offences against the person, and the remainder with offences against property. The following disposition was made of them, so far as the cases are reported: One thousand three hundred and seventy-seven committed to jail; seven hundred and six discharged on bail; one thousand four hundred and fifty-two turned over to the military authorities; seven thousand nine hundred and eighty-four dismissed; one thousand nine hundred and thirty-two committed to the workhouse, and eight hundred and twenty-eight released on security to keep the peace. Fines were imposed in eleven thousand four hundred and eighty-seven cases, amounting to sixty-one thousand nine hundred and forty-three dollars and ninety-two cents, (\$61,943 92,) and in five hundred and thirty-one cases light punishments were inflicted. No report was received in one hundred and thirty-one cases. Two thousand three hundred and twenty-one destitute persons were furnished with lodging, one hundred and fourteen lost children restored to their parents, and one hundred and fifty-four sick or disabled persons assisted or taken to the hospital. The number of arrests during the year exceeds by three thousand those made during any previous year; and the increase in the amount of fines imposed is nearly one hundred per centum. The actual expense to the cities of Washington and Georgetown, and to Washington county, of the present police system is about forty-five thousand dollars. For further details I refer to the report of the board.

The utility of the police telegraph has been fully demonstrated during the past year. By its agency a large force can be speedily concentrated at any given point where an emergency requires its presence. Seven thousand eight hundred and thirty-three messages have been transmitted through the central office, and a large amount of correspondence conducted between the precinct stations. An appropriation sufficient to discharge the cost of its construction is respectfully recommended to Congress.

The force has been maintained, as far as practicable, at the maximum authorized by Congress; but it is believed to be unequal to the public necessities. Since its organization the population of the District has nearly doubled, and the increase of crime has been in still greater proportion. The board present facts and arguments which are, in my opinion, conclusive in favor of such an increase as will enable the police force to discharge with vigor and promptitude the duties required of them. It is hoped that Congress will adopt such measures in this regard as will insure within the District the maintenance of public order, the due execution of police regulations, and the adequate protection of the rights of person and property.

JAIL, HOUSE OF REFUGE, AND PENITENTIARY.

It appears from the report of the warden that there were 227 prisoners in the jail of this District on the 1st day of November, embracing persons of each sex and of various ages. Some of them were convicted of minor offences,

punishable by fine and imprisonment; others were committed in default of bail, or were awaiting sentence in the criminal court. The inmates are occasionally more numerous. The building, although designed for one hundred prisoners, does not furnish accommodation for even that limited number, without neglecting the precautions which a due regard to their health and secure custody demands. The crowded state of the building and its very imperfect ventilation have a most injurious influence upon the sanitary condition of its inmates. This evil is enhanced by the want of a hospital department, to which the sick may be transferred from the impure atmosphere of the jail, and receive the benefit of fresh air, and the treatment which their situation imperatively demands. The building is so insecure that constant and vigilant attention, with the aid of a military force detailed by the War Department, is requisite to prevent the escape of prisoners, many of whom are desperate outlaws, charged with the commission of the most aggravated crimes. For want of a workshop connected with the building, such of the inmates as have been convicted of petit misdemeanors are huddled together, without needful employment, a prey to the vices born of idleness. The tedious hours are beguiled by frivolous pastimes, or frittered away in reckless or profane conversation, so that it is to be feared that many, on being discharged, are prepared for a bolder career of crime.

During the past summer the cells have been increased in strength, and such an addition made to their number as the available space would permit. The sewerage and ventilation have been improved, and light introduced. Nevertheless the building remains a reproach to the government, and a nuisance. Humanity and policy alike require that a suitable jail should be erected, and I cannot too earnestly invoke the early and favorable action of Congress on the subject. The propriety of increasing the salary of the warden is also respectfully submitted for consideration.

Congress, by the act approved March 3, 1865, made provision for the confinement of juveniles under the age of sixteen years thereafter convicted, by any court of the United States, of a crime whose penalty is imprisonment. Authority was given to the Secretary of the Interior to contract with the managers of houses of refuge for the imprisonment, subsistence, and proper employment of such convicted offenders. Soon after the passage of this act the department entered into correspondence with the marshals of the United States, and other parties, on the subject. A contract was made with one such institution, and it could admit but an inconsiderable number of convicts, and declined to receive into custody any colored persons.

It was ascertained that an offender could not be received by some of these institutions if the term to which he had been sentenced expired during his minority, and that the regulations provide that he may be discharged at any time upon the order of the directors. The convict is sentenced by the federal court for a specific term, and the act requires that he "shall be confined during the term of sentence." This is incompatible with the exercise of the discretionary authority conferred on nearly all of these institutions by State legislation to discharge him at an earlier period and to bind him by indentures of appren-

ticeship, or to prolong his detention until he gives satisfactory evidence of reformation. Doubts were entertained by the officers in charge of others, whether they were not prohibited by the terms of their organic laws from receiving offenders other than those convicted by the tribunals of the State in which they were located. From the best consideration I have been able to bestow on the subject, I am of opinion that State as well as federal legislation is necessary to give full practical effect to the humane intentions evinced by Congress in the enactment of the law.

The motives which induced the action of Congress appeal with equal force in favor of the erection of a house of refuge in this District. The confinement of the youthful convict in the penitentiary, where he is in communion with inveterate transgressors, has a most corrupting effect upon his modes of thought and principles of action, and, after suffering the penalty which the law imposes upon convicted guilt, he rarely returns to the path of virtue. Beneficent results attest the wisdom and humanity of providing an asylum for such convicts. In many instances they have been led astray by evil parental influences, or left in destitute orphanage, assailed on every side by temptation, and without a friend to encourage them by precept and virtuous example. A large discretion should be given to the managers of such an institution. They should be authorized to detain the offender until he attains his majority; or, should they deem it expedient, provide him, at an earlier period, with a home far removed from his old associations. During his confinement he should be taught a useful trade, habits of industry, the rudiments of an education, and the lessons of morality and religion. Under the benignant influences which would thus surround them, many would doubtless be rescued from the ways of guilt and sorrow, and rendered, in after life, useful members of that society of which they once threatened to become the scourge and opprobrium.

Influenced by these considerations, I have encouraged an incorporated society of benevolent gentlemen to take the preliminary steps for the establishment of such an institution on the aqueduct farm, in this District. It is hoped that Congress may afford them the necessary assistance to secure this result.

The War Department has not yet surrendered the building in this city formerly used as a penitentiary. It is ill adapted to the purposes for which it was employed. This department has heretofore invited the attention of Congress to the propriety of erecting a new building. The subject is again presented for such action as may be deemed expedient.

GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE.

I invite the attention of Congress to the tenth annual report of the Board of Visitors, and the thirteenth annual report of the superintendent of construction, of the government hospital for the insane.

These papers exhibit the condition of the institution during the past fiscal year, and present, in addition to statistical information, many valuable and highly instructive suggestions. The number of patients under treatment at the commencement of the year was three hundred and fifty-one, including one hundred and ninety-one from the army, eighteen from the navy, two from the

Soldiers' Home, and four rebel prisoners. The number admitted during the year was five hundred and fifteen, of whom four hundred and twenty-six were from the army, ten from the navy, seventy-two from civil life, three from the Quartermaster's and Subsistence departments, and four were rebel prisoners. The whole number under treatment during the year was eight hundred and sixty-six, of whom six hundred and forty-five belonged to the military or naval service. One hundred and forty-seven died. There were discharged as recovered, three hundred and forty-eight; as improved, one hundred and one; and as unimproved, nine.

Congress failed at its last session to make the required appropriation for the support of the hospital, and with your approbation I negotiated, for that purpose, a temporary loan. Attention is invited to the subject, as the money was obtained on most favorable terms from the First National Bank, to whose officers assurances were given that Congress would provide for its repayment at an early period of the approaching session.

The hospital was established for the treatment of the insane of this District, as well as of the army, the navy, and the revenue cutter service. It has, from its origin, been conducted in such manner as to merit and receive the uninterrupted confidence and patronage of Congress. Its success and usefulness are due in a great degree to the superintendent, who has been identified with its history, and who brings to its service professional attainments of the highest order, long experience, and unsurpassed fidelity in the discharge of his arduous and delicate duties. He has received the active co-operation of the board of visitors and of his subordinate officers. His salary was originally fixed at its present rate. The propriety of increasing it is presented for the consideration of Congress.

COLUMBIA INSTITUTE FOR THE DEAF AND DUMB.

The Columbia Institution for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb has furnished instruction to eighty-five deaf mutes since the first day of July, 1864. Pursuant to the provisions of an act of Congress approved February 23, 1865, the blind pupils, seven in number, were transferred to the Maryland Institution for the Blind. The books, maps, and papers, especially designed for the instruction of such pupils, were delivered to that institution, for the use of the beneficiaries of the United States.

Indigent deaf and dumb persons of "teachable age" properly belonging to this District, and the deaf and dumb children of all persons in the naval or military service of the United States, while such persons are actually in such service, are received into the institution upon the order of the Secretary of the Interior. The annual charge of \$150 for each pupil so received has been paid, as provided by law. In addition to this outlay, appropriations have been made for salaries and contingent expenses, the purchase of grounds, the erection of buildings, the introduction of Potomac water, and other improvements. The directors, in their report, propose to relinquish the per-capita charge for the government pupils, and include the estimated amount thereof in the item for

salaries and contingent expenses, which they desire may be increased to \$20,700. This sum, with the other items embraced in their estimate, will require for the next fiscal year an appropriation of \$71,940. During the current fiscal year the institution has received no aid from Congress, other than the sums paid for the maintenance of the pupils admitted by order of this department, and the board ask that a clause appropriating \$55,445.87 be inserted in the deficiency bill.

Congress, by the act of April 8, 1864, authorized the Columbia Institution to confer degrees in the liberal arts and sciences on pupils of the institution, or others, who, by their proficiency in learning, or other meritorious distinction, may be thereunto entitled. Pursuant to the presumed authority conferred by this act, the board has organized an advanced department, in addition to the primary school where the elementary branches and the mechanic arts have been successfully taught. They designate it as "The National Deaf Mute College." A preparatory or intermediate class has also been formed, with a range of studies more thorough and efficient than in any similar school in this country. It is designed to furnish their own pupils, and the graduates of the State institutions, with an opportunity of attaining the standard of proficiency requisite to an admission into the freshman class of the college.

Five students have entered upon their collegiate course. Eight are in the preparatory class, four of whom are residents of the District of Columbia. Attention is invited to the views of the directors on the subject. They propose to make the course of study in the college the full equivalent of that adopted in other colleges, and, as the number of their classes increases, to add to the number of professors, taking care that the corps of instructors shall come fully up to the average of college faculties, in number, ability, and fitness.

The institution is authorized, by the fifth section of the organic act, to receive and instruct deaf and dumb persons from the States and Territories of the United States, upon such terms as may be agreed upon by themselves, their parents, guardians or trustees, and the proper authorities of the institution. It is proposed to receive and instruct those who desire to enter the advanced classes and prosecute the preliminary studies which will fit them for a collegiate course, but who have been unable to make adequate preparation in consequence of the limited educational advantages in State institutions. It is suggested that cases have arisen, and will, doubtless, continue to present themselves, of worthy deaf mutes unable to pay the usual charges; and the directors conceive that they are authorized to remit, in whole or in part, such charges, as circumstances seem to require. It was obviously not the intention of Congress to provide, at the national expense, for the instruction of this description of persons residing in the different States. The benefits of the institution, gratuitously conferred, are confined to the two classes first mentioned; and no portion of the fund appropriated by Congress for the salaries and incidental expenses should be diverted from its legitimate purposes and applied to the support of pupils belonging to neither of those classes. The expenses of all such, if not properly

chargeable upon the fund furnished by voluntary private contributions, should be defrayed by themselves, or by the State or community to which they belong. The board disclaim the intention of competing or interfering with State institutions; but as the range of instruction in them is confined within narrow limits, an opinion is advanced in the report that "funds should be drawn from the national resources" for the support of an institution which will extend to these unfortunates, facilities for cultivating the higher branches of learning. The appropriations asked for imply a conviction on the part of the directors that this opinion will be sanctioned and made effectual by appropriate legislation. It will be for Congress to determine whether an institution shall be maintained at the national metropolis, where the deaf mutes of the country may enjoy the opportunity of pursuing the classic and scientific studies which enter into the course of collegiate instruction.

The act of February 23, 1865, declares the corporate name of the institution I have serious doubts whether it, or any department thereof, can rightfully assume the name of "The National Deaf Mute Collège" without authority from Congress.

It affords me pleasure to bear witness to the disinterested zeal with which the directors have labored to render the institution as useful in its practical workings as it is humane and generous in its conception. The vacancies in the board occasioned by the lamented death of Mr. Edes and of Mr. Mitchell have been filled by the appointment of Mr. Chief Justice Chase and Benjamin B. French, Esq.

The board has been fortunate in securing the services of those charged with the academic and domestic departments. They have performed their duties with an intelligence and fidelity worthy of all praise.

COURT-HOUSES.

This department, on repeated occasions, has referred to the limited and precarious accommodations for holding the courts of the southern district of New York. The government had a term of years in the property which those courts continue to occupy, but is liable to be soon dispossessed under the present temporary arrangement, and no other could be made after the expiration of the lease. It appears from the report made by this department to the Senate of the United States on the 6th of December last, that on the first day of January of that year more cases were pending, and more had been instituted within the preceding twelve months, in that than in any other judicial district. The duty of the government to furnish all proper facilities for the prompt transaction of the business of the courts, and the preservation of their archives and records, will not be questioned. The courts at Baltimore, Philadelphia, Boston, Cincinnati, Louisville, New Orleans, and various other points, are now held in buildings belonging to the government, and no just reason exists why this policy should not be extended, and its benefits secured to the judges, officers, and litigating parties at the leading commercial city of the Union. There was a clause in the lease reserving

to the United States the right of purchasing the property, at a stipulated sum, within a specified period, which has since elapsed, and I am not advised whether the proprietors are now willing to dispose of it on the same terms. I recommend that this department be authorized to make, by purchase, permanent arrangements for the federal courts in the city of New York, and that an appropriation be placed under its control for the purpose.

The eastern judicial district of New York was created at the last session of Congress. The department has encountered serious difficulty in its attempts to secure suitable apartments in the city of Brooklyn for the accommodation of the courts. I strongly urge upon Congress the consideration of the propriety of providing for the erection of a suitable building, portions of which may be appropriated to the district and circuit courts and their respective officers, and the remainder to the city post office and other needful public uses.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAS. HARLAN.

Secretary of the Interior.

To the PRESIDENT.