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Unexpended balances of appropriations

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UNEXPENDED BALANCES OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(To accompany bill H. R. No. 225.)

JANUARY 9, 1838.

Read, and committed to the Committee of the Whole House to which said bill is committed.

Mr. CAMBRELENG, from the Committee of Ways and Means, made the following

REPORT:

The Committee of Ways and Means, to whom were referred the report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the finances, and the estimates of appropriations, report in part:

The amount of appropriations unexpended at the close of the year 1837 is estimated at more than fourteen millions of dollars, of which about ten millions will be required to complete the service of the past and preceding years; leaving nearly four millions applicable to the expenditures of the present year. A proportion of the appropriations for the support of Government must necessarily remain unexpended at the end of every year; but in some branches of the public service the outstanding appropriations are unusually large, and, as new appropriations for similar objects may be proposed, it is deemed proper to notice some of the most material of these unexpended balances, applicable to the past and preceding years, viz:

For light-houses, &c., the aggregate amount is	-	-	\$688,000 00
Surveying public lands	-	-	260,000 00
Public buildings, including hospitals; custom-houses, &c.	-	-	633,000 00
Roads, rivers, &c.	-	-	583,000 00
Indian department, for treaties; &c.	-	-	2,682,000 00
Indian hostilities	-	-	1,130,000 00
Army—general service	-	\$865,000 00	
arsenals	-	100,000 00	
fortifications	-	149,000 00	
armament of fortifications	-	110,000 00	
			1,224,000 00
Navy—general service	-	1,416,000 00	
two sloops and six vessels of war	-	520,000 00	
gradual improvement	-	100,000 00	
marine barracks	-	150,000 00	
			2,187,000 00
			<u>\$9,387,000 00</u>

The other unexpended balances are for the expenses of the Supreme Court, the Mint, arming the militia, &c.

The unexpended balance for light-houses, &c. is unusually large, owing to the very large appropriation of 921,694 dollars made by Congress for these objects at the last winter session. In most cases, these appropriations were made for completing the works, without regard to the amount which could be expended within the year.

The outstanding appropriation for surveying the public lands is large, but none is asked for the year 1838.

The amount for public buildings is increased by the appropriations for the Treasury and Patent Office.

The appropriations for rivers and harbors have been steadily increased by Congress, and the unexpended balance increases accordingly. There was appropriated for these objects, in 1837, 1,367,188 dollars, exclusive of 300,000 dollars for the Alexandria canal.

The balance of appropriations for the military service is not larger than might be expected, under present circumstances. That for fortifications is less than usual, as no appropriation was made for the past year. That for Indian hostilities is only a part of what was authorized during the extra session, which is now nearly exhausted.

The two branches of the public service in which the largest unexpended balances exist, are the Indian and Navy Departments, viz:

For Indian treaties, &c.	-	-	-	-	-	\$2,682,000	00
For the naval service	-	-	-	-	-	2,187,000	00
A further amount unexpended, which may be applied to expenditures for the navy in 1838	-	-	-	-	-	2,772,000	00
						<u>\$7,641,000</u>	<u>00</u>

The amount estimated to be unexpended at the end of the year, of the appropriations for carrying into effect Indian treaties, and for current expenses, is 2,682,000 dollars. This arises from large appropriations having been made in late years for the removal of the tribes, and for payment for their lands. There were appropriations, amounting to about 5,500,000 dollars, made in 1836, to carry into effect the treaty with the Cherokees of the 29th December, 1835, and of the supplementary treaty, of which there remained unexpended \$2,069,384 22, leaving but about 600,000 dollars unexpended, for all other objects in the Indian department. It is estimated that about one million of the amount appropriated for the treaties with the Cherokees will be required during the present year, and that an equal amount will be postponed till 1839. As these appropriations are for fulfilling treaties, no transfer of them can be made, with propriety, to other objects of public expenditure. The aggregate amount estimated for the Indian department in 1838, is about 850,000 dollars less than it was in 1837.

The amount unexpended in the naval department, including that which may be applied to the service of 1838, is 4,959,000 dollars. Of this, the amount required for the past and preceding years is 2,187,000 dollars. As the expenditures for the navy are made abroad as well as at home, there is a necessity for a larger unexpended balance. But other causes have made this balance unnecessarily large. When original appropria-

tions are made for building vessels, or for other new objects, the whole amount required to complete them is appropriated at once, when probably the expenditures may not be made for one, two, and three years. Thus there remained unexpended on the 1st of January, 520,000 dollars for building two sloops and six vessels of war, and 150,000 dollars for marine barracks ; of the latter, no part has been expended. If the appropriations were made only for the amount actually required during the year, it would prevent an accumulation of these unexpended balances.

Another cause of the increase of this excess of appropriations beyond the current expenditures of Government, is an omission, sometimes, to deduct from the estimates the surplus of appropriation not required for past years, and applicable to the service of the coming year. These balances at the close of 1837, are estimated at 3,780,000 dollars ; a part of this amount is for the patent fund, marine hospital, Alexandria canal, miscellaneous claims, salaries of ministers, &c., invalids, half-pay and revolutionary pensions, and smaller objects of appropriation. The largest amount is however, in the naval branch of the public service, viz :

Pay and subsistence of the navy, - - - - -	\$1,000,000
Bounties to seamen, - - - - -	22,000
Provisions, - - - - -	150,000
Gradual increase, - - - - -	1,500,000
Repairs of vessels, - - - - -	50,000
Rebuilding frigate Congress, - - - - -	50,000
	\$2,772,000

The unexpended balance appropriated for provisions was deducted in the estimate, but the million for pay and subsistence was not. The committee applied to the Department for further information, and received from the Secretary the annexed letters from the Navy Commissioners and the Second Comptroller. From the latter it appears that there was drawn from the Treasury,

For pay of commissioned, warrant, and petty officers and	
seamen, - - - - -	in 1833, \$1,352,148 67
	in 1834, 1,598,203 01
	in 1835, 1,375,892 31
Excluding 70,000 dollars for other purposes	in 1836, 1,841,191 00
Estimating for the last eleven days of the year	in 1837, 2,446,142 01
The estimate for 1838 is - - - - -	2,311,854 91

The committee propose to apply the million unexpended for pay and subsistence to the service of 1838, and to deduct the amount from the appropriations for the present year. The latter will then be in the aggregate about 2,350,000 dollars less than the amount appropriated for the naval service in 1837.

It is, however, in the gradual improvement branch of the naval service that the unexpended balance at the end of the year is increasing steadily and most rapidly. Under the act of the 2d of March, 1833, 500,000 dollars was annually appropriated for six years, for the purchase of materials for the navy. According to the statement of the Navy Commissioners, appended to the Secretary's report, there remained at the end of the past year 1,795,288 dollars and 26 cents unexpended of these appropriations. If

making prospective appropriations. For the purpose of diminishing this excessive and unnecessary appropriation of 2,300,000 dollars for gradual improvement, in 1838, they propose to apply one million and a half to other branches of the naval service during the present year, and to appropriate, out of the revenues of 1839 and 1840, 750,000 dollars in each year, for the gradual improvement of the navy. By this transfer, and the application of the other balances to the service of 1838, the unexpended appropriations at the end of the year, in this branch, will be diminished 2,700,000 dollars, viz :

Surplus applicable to pay and subsistence	-	-	\$1,000,000
provisions	-	-	150,000
repairs of vessels	-	-	50,000
gradual improvement	-	-	1,500,000
			\$2,700,000

The committee, in conformity to these suggestions, propose a substitute for the bill making appropriations for the naval service for the year 1838. The unexpended balances applied to the current expenses of the year, and the difference between the estimates for 1838 and the appropriations for 1837 make an aggregate of 3,900,000 dollars.

NAVY COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE,

December 19, 1837.

STR : The Commissioners of the Navy, in reply to the letter of the honorable C. C. Cambreleng to you of the 18th instant, which you were pleased to refer to them "for the explanations therein required," have, in compliance with your directions, the honor to submit the following communication :

It will be perceived by the estimates for 1838, that, under the head of "provisions," the sum of \$181,282 50 was deducted from the estimated cost of rations for 1838, in consequence of the amount supposed to be available 1st January, 1838, of former appropriations for provisions.

By the report L, (which accompanied the estimate for 1838) it appears that the liabilities of the appropriation for gradual improvement, to meet contracts already made and offers accepted, leave only \$144,978 06 available for other purposes. When the payments under this appropriation will become due, depends upon circumstances which cannot be estimated with much certainty. Nearly all the contracts are for timber, in the delivery of which the contractors have experienced interruptions, arising from the late and still existing difficulties in Florida. Many of the contractors are, it is understood, getting out timber at other places, and there is reason to expect large deliveries in the course of the year 1838.

With regard to the appropriation for pay, the board have not the means of correctly ascertaining the amounts which may be actually required in any given year, as this depends, in a great degree, upon the number of vessels which may be paid off within the year. Pay becomes due gradually. The greater portion of the officers are generally paid at short intervals, as their pay becomes due ; but the greater part of the pay of others

accumulates during the cruise, until the cruise terminates and the crew are discharged.

The course of the board has been to estimate for the force which is directed by the Department; and the experience of the service has shown, it is believed, that the amounts shown by the estimates are eventually required to meet the payments when they finally become due; and it is always important that no delay should occur in paying the men when they are entitled to their discharge.

The letter of Mr. Cambreleng is herewith returned.

I have the honor to be,

With great respect, sir,

Your most obedient servant,

I. CHAUNCEY.

To the Hon. M. DICKERSON,

Secretary of the Navy.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,

Second Comptroller's Office, Dec'r 21, 1837.

SIR: In answer to the inquiry of the chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means of the House of Representatives, enclosed in your letter of this date, I have the honor to state, that in 1836 there was drawn from the Treasury, out of the appropriation "Pay of commissioned, warrant, and petty officers, and seamen," the sum of \$1,911,191. Of this, \$30,000 was a transfer by the President of the United States to "Pay, &c., marine corps," and \$40,000 by like authority to "Provisions."

Of the appropriation "Pay, &c., navy," in 1837, there has been drawn and estimated \$2,446,142 01.*

The amount drawn in 1836 from "Gradual improvement," was \$466,925 65. Of this, the sum of \$150,000 was a transfer to the appropriation for "Exploring expedition."

In 1837 there has been drawn, to the 20th inst., inclusive, of "Gradual improvement," the sum of \$265,211 07; and, by comparison with preceding dates, \$13,000 more may be estimated.

I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully, yours,

ALBION K. PARRIS,

Comptroller.

Hon. M. DICKERSON,

Secretary of the Navy.

* \$2,408,750 90 has been drawn to 20th instant, inclusive; the estimate makes up the sum which it is presumed will be drawn in 1837, and the whole stated as \$2,446,142 01.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,

Second Comptroller's Office, Dec'r 27, 1837.

SIR: In reply to the request of the Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means of the House of Representatives, conveyed through your letter of this date, I have the honor to state that there was drawn out of the Treasury, for "Pay of commissioned, warrant, and petty officers, and seamen"—

In 1833, the sum of	-	-	\$1,438,753 07
And refunded in same year,	-	-	86,604 40
			<hr/>
			\$1,352,148 67
			<hr/>
In 1834, the sum of	-	-	\$1,689,834 60
And refunded in same year,	-	-	91,631 59
			<hr/>
			\$1,598,203 01
			<hr/>
In 1835, the sum of	-	-	\$1,464,491 61
And refunded in same year,	-	-	88,599 30
			<hr/>
			\$1,375,892 31
			<hr/>

Of the appropriations for "Gradual improvement of the navy," there was drawn—

In 1833, the sum of	-	-	\$277,156 29
And refunded in same year,	-	-	4,603 33
			<hr/>
			\$272,552 96
			<hr/>
In 1834, the sum of	-	-	\$93,343 09
And refunded in same year,	-	-	6,984 66
			<hr/>
			\$86,358 43
			<hr/>
In 1835, the sum of	-	-	\$354,305 84
And refunded in same year,	-	-	7,644 54
			<hr/>
			\$346,661 30
			<hr/>

It will thus appear, after deducting the amounts refunded, that there has been drawn, during the years named in the inquiry, out of the appropriations—

"Pay, &c., navy,"	-	-	\$4,326,243 99
"Gradual improvement,"	-	-	705,572 69

Which I have the honor to submit.

With great respect, sir,

Your obedient servant,

ALBION K. PARRIS,

Comptroller.

HON. MAHLON DICKERSON,

Secretary of the Navy.