

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

FEBRUARY 20, 1867.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. CONNESS made the following

REPORT.

[To accompany bill S. No. 613.]

The Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads, to whom was referred the memorial of D. B. Allen & Co., representing the Atlantic Steamship and the Pacific Mail Steamship companies, for compensation for carrying the United States mails during the suspension of the overland mail service in 1864 and 1865, beg leave to report:

That the suspension of the overland mail service, by reason of Indian hostilities on the plains, took place in 1864; that the amount paid for said service annually was \$840,000, while \$160,000 annually was paid to the said steamship companies for carrying printed matter and such letters as might be marked to be specially sent that way.

When the suspension occurred, leaving the entire Pacific slope without mails, the Postmaster General applied to the said steamship companies to carry the entire mails during the interruption of the overland route. The companies cheerfully complied, and for a period of about four months all the mails of the United States for the Pacific were safely and expeditiously transported by them. According to the lowest rates for which the United States mails were ever carried by sea to California, namely, \$300,000, and deducting the \$160,000 received by them for carrying printed matter, they would be entitled to receive some \$46,000 for the extra service thus performed. It has been proposed to pay only the rates of freight charged by the steamship lines for carrying the additional mail matter; but the utter injustice of this rule will be seen, when it is remembered that the mails have to receive extra care, and that no steamship can leave without having them on board, after causing serious and expensive delays.

Knowing, however, the difficulties attending claims after they have been allowed to remain unpaid for long periods of time, and the indisposition to pay such, and the companies consenting, the committee recommend the payment of half the sum found to be justly due, \$23,000, and report a bill for the payment of the same, the passage of which is recommended.