

Accounts of officers, &c., of the Congress and other vessels to be settled equitably.

Post, p. 818.

Certain sailors, &c., to receive not over \$60 each for loss of clothing, &c.

of the Treasury be, and they hereby are, authorized and directed to settle, upon the principles of justice and equity, the accounts of the officers, sailors, marines, and crews of the United States frigate Congress, the sloop Cumberland, and of any other vessel or vessels-of-war, the books of which were lost or destroyed in consequence of the naval engagements at Hampton Roads on the eighth and ninth of March, anno Domini one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That the Secretary of the Navy be, and he is hereby, authorized to furnish to the sailors, marines, and crews of any of the vessels engaged in the naval actions in the foregoing section mentioned, whose bedding, clothing, or other property was lost or destroyed therein, with an amount sufficient to cover their losses, and not exceeding sixty dollars to each man, to be paid in kind or in money, at the discretion of the flag officer of the North Atlantic Squadron.

APPROVED, April 2, 1862.

April 2, 1862.

CHAP. LIII. — *An Act to prohibit the Allowance or Payment of Pensions to the Children of Officers and Soldiers of the War of the Revolution.*

Claims for certain pensions to children, &c., of persons serving during the Revolution prohibited.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That from and after the passage of this act no claim for a pension, or for an increase of pension, shall be allowed in favor of the children or other descendants of any person who served in the war of the Revolution, or of the widow of such person, when such person or his widow died without having established a claim to a pension.

APPROVED, April 2, 1862.

April 16, 1862.

CHAP. LIV. — *An Act for the Release of certain Persons held to Service or Labor in the District of Columbia.*

1862, ch. 155.

Post, p. 538.

Slavery in the District of Columbia abolished.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That all persons held to service or labor within the District of Columbia by reason of African descent are hereby discharged and freed of and from all claim to such service or labor; and from and after the passage of this act neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except for crime, whereof the party shall be duly convicted, shall hereafter exist in said District.

Loyal persons may petition commissioners for remuneration, &c.

Petitions to set forth, &c.,

to be under oath.

Post, p. 538.

Oath not to be evidence, &c.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That all persons loyal to the United States, holding claims to service or labor against persons discharged therefrom by this act, may, within ninety days from the passage thereof, but not thereafter, present to the commissioners hereinafter mentioned their respective statements or petitions in writing, verified by oath or affirmation, setting forth the names, ages, and personal description of such persons, the manner in which said petitioners acquired such claim, and any facts touching the value thereof, and declaring his allegiance to the Government of the United States, and that he has not borne arms against the United States during the present rebellion, nor in any way given aid or comfort thereto: *Provided*, That the oath of the party to the petition shall not be evidence of the facts therein stated.

Three commissioners to be appointed.

Their powers and duties.

Apportionment not to exceed what.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted*, That the President of the United States, with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint three commissioners, residents of the District of Columbia, any two of whom shall have power to act, who shall receive the petitions above mentioned, and who shall investigate and determine the validity and value of the claims therein presented, as aforesaid, and appraise and apportion, under the proviso hereto annexed, the value in money of the several claims by them found to be valid: *Provided, however*, That the entire sum so appraised and apportioned shall not exceed in the aggregate an amount equal to

three hundred dollars for each person shown to have been so held by lawful claim: *And provided, further,* That no claim shall be allowed for any slave or slaves brought into said District after the passage of this act, nor for any slave claimed by any person who has borne arms against the Government of the United States in the present rebellion, or in any way given aid or comfort thereto, or which originates in or by virtue of any transfer heretofore made, or which shall hereafter be made by any person who has in any manner aided or sustained the rebellion against the Government of the United States.

Slaves of certain persons not to be allowed for.

SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted,* That said commissioners shall, within nine months from the passage of this act, make a full and final report of their proceedings, findings, and appraisement, and shall deliver the same to the Secretary of the Treasury, which report shall be deemed and taken to be conclusive in all respects, except as hereinafter provided; and the Secretary of the Treasury shall, with like exception, cause the amounts so apportioned to said claims to be paid from the Treasury of the United States to the parties found by said report to be entitled thereto as aforesaid, and the same shall be received in full and complete compensation: *Provided,* That in cases where petitions may be filed presenting conflicting claims, or setting up liens, said commissioners shall so specify in said report, and payment shall not be made according to the award of said commissioners until a period of sixty days shall have elapsed, during which time any petitioner claiming an interest in the particular amount may file a bill in equity in the Circuit Court of the District of Columbia, making all other claimants defendants thereto, setting forth the proceedings in such case before said commissioners and their action therein, and praying that the party to whom payment has been awarded may be enjoined from receiving the same; and if said court shall grant such provisional order, a copy thereof may, on motion of said complainant, be served upon the Secretary of the Treasury, who shall thereupon cause the said amount of money to be paid into said court, subject to its orders and final decree, which payment shall be in full and complete compensation, as in other cases.

Commissioners to report within nine months.

Sums awarded by them to be paid.

Provision for conflicting claims to, or liens upon, slaves.

SEC. 5. *And be it further enacted,* That said commissioners shall hold their sessions in the city of Washington, at such place and times as the President of the United States may direct, of which they shall give due and public notice. They shall have power to subpoena and compel the attendance of witnesses, and to receive testimony and enforce its production, as in civil cases before courts of justice, without the exclusion of any witness on account of color; and they may summon before them the persons making claim to service or labor, and examine them under oath; and they may also, for purposes of identification and appraisement, call before them the persons so claimed. Said commissioners shall appoint a clerk, who shall keep files and [a] complete record of all proceedings before them, who shall have power to administer oaths and affirmations in said proceedings, and who shall issue all lawful process by them ordered. The Marshal of the District of Columbia shall personally, or by deputy, attend upon the sessions of said commissioners, and shall execute the process issued by said clerk.

Commissioners to hold their sessions,

to summon, &c., witnesses.

Color not to exclude.

Commissioners to appoint a clerk; his powers and duties.

Marshal to attend upon their sessions, &c.

SEC. 6. *And be it further enacted,* That said commissioners shall receive in compensation for their services the sum of two thousand dollars each, to be paid upon the filing of their report; that said clerk shall receive for his services the sum of two hundred dollars per month; that said marshal shall receive such fees as are allowed by law for similar services performed by him in the Circuit Court of the District of Columbia; that the Secretary of the Treasury shall cause all other reasonable expenses of said commission to be audited and allowed, and that said compensation, fees, and expenses shall be paid from the Treasury of the United States.

Pay of commissioners,

of clerk, of marshal,

Other reasonable expenses.

Appropriation of \$1,000,000.

SEC. 7. *And be it further enacted,* That for the purpose of carrying this act into effect there is hereby appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, a sum not exceeding one million of dollars.

Kidnapping, &c., how punished.

SEC. 8. *And be it further enacted,* That any person or persons who shall kidnap, or in any manner transport or procure to be taken out of said District, any person or persons discharged and freed by the provisions of this act, or any free person or persons with intent to re-enslave or sell such person or persons into slavery, or shall re-enslave any of said freed persons, the person or persons so offending shall be deemed guilty of a felony, and on conviction thereof in any court of competent jurisdiction in said District, shall be imprisoned in the penitentiary not less than five nor more than twenty years.

Owners, &c., to file statements of persons held to service by them, in twenty days.

SEC. 9. *And be it further enacted,* That within twenty days, or within such further time as the commissioners herein provided for shall limit, after the passage of this act, a statement in writing or schedule shall be filed with the clerk of the Circuit Court for the District of Columbia, by the several owners or claimants to the services of the persons made free or manumitted by this act, setting forth the names, ages, sex, and particular description of such persons, severally; and the said clerk shall receive and record, in a book by him to be provided and kept for that purpose, the said statements or schedules on receiving fifty cents each therefor, and no claim shall be allowed to any claimant or owner who shall neglect this requirement.

Duty of clerk.

Penalty for neglect.

Clerk of circuit court to deliver to those made free certificates thereof.

SEC. 10. *And be it further enacted,* That the said clerk and his successors in office shall, from time to time, on demand, and on receiving twenty-five cents therefor, prepare, sign, and deliver to each person made free or manumitted by this act, a certificate under the seal of said court, setting out the name, age, and description of such person, and stating that such person was duly manumitted and set free by this act.

\$100,000 appropriated to aid colonization, &c.

SEC. 11. *And be it further enacted,* That the sum of one hundred thousand dollars, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, is hereby appropriated, to be expended under the direction of the President of the United States, to aid in the colonization and settlement of such free persons of African descent now residing in said District, including those to be liberated by this act, as may desire to emigrate to the Republics of Hayti or Liberia, or such other country beyond the limits of the United States as the President may determine: *Provided,* The expenditure for this purpose shall not exceed one hundred dollars for each emigrant.

Not over \$100 to each emigrant.

Repeal of inconsistent laws and ordinances.

SEC. 12. *And be it further enacted,* That all acts of Congress and all laws of the State of Maryland in force in said District, and all ordinances of the cities of Washington and Georgetown, inconsistent with the provisions of this act, are hereby repealed.

APPROVED, April 16, 1862.

April 16, 1862.

CHAP. LV. — *An Act to reorganize and increase the Efficiency of the Medical Department of the Army.*

Addition to medical corps of the army; surgeons, assistant surgeons, cadets, and hospital stewards.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That there shall be added to the present medical corps of the army ten surgeons and ten assistant surgeons, to be promoted and appointed under existing laws; twenty medical cadets, and as many hospital stewards as the surgeon general may consider necessary for the public service, and that their pay and that of all hospital stewards in the volunteer as well as the regular service shall be thirty dollars per month, to be computed from the passage of this act.

Cadets to have one ration.

And all medical cadets in the service shall, in addition to their pay, receive one ration per day either in kind or commutation.