

register and receiver of the proper land-office to receive all applications in cases presented under this act, pursuant to such instructions as may be prescribed by the commissioner of the general land-office, and to adjudge all such cases as preliminary to a final decision in due course of law.

Duty of registers and receivers under this act.

APPROVED, July 2, 1864.

CHAP. CCXIX.—*An Act to authorize assimilated Rank to be given to the Warrant Officers of the United States Navy, and for other Purposes.* July 2, 1864.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the President of the United States is hereby authorized, if, in his judgment, it shall be conducive to the interest of the service, to give assimilated rank to the warrant officers of the navy, viz: boatswains, gunners, carpenters, and sail-makers, as follows: After five years of service to rank with ensigns; and after ten years service to rank with masters.

Assimilated rank to warrant officers in the navy.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That, from and after the passage of this act, the officers named in the preceding section shall be known as "warrant officers in the naval service of the United States," and shall be so entered upon the Naval Register.

To be called "warrant officers," &c.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted,* That in all cases where it has been, or may be, found necessary during the present war to detain in confinement persons found on board of captured vessels, the expenses of the detention of such persons, when not chargeable to the proceeds of prize or other fund, shall be paid out of the appropriation for defraying the expenses of suits in which the United States are concerned, and that the expenses of prisoners sentenced by naval court-martial to confinement in a penitentiary shall be defrayed from the same fund.

Expenses of confinement of persons found in captured vessels.

SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted,* That the following addition be made to the clerical force now authorized by law in the Navy Department:—Bureau of provisions and clothing, two clerks of the third class and two of the first class.

Additional clerks in the Navy Department.

Bureau of ordnance, one clerk of the third class.

Bureau of equipment and recruiting, one clerk of the second class and one clerk of the first class.

APPROVED, July 2, 1864.

CHAP. CCXX.—*An Act for increased Facilities of Telegraph Communication between the Atlantic and Pacific States and the Territory of Idaho.* July 2, 1864.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the United States Telegraph Company, and their associates, are hereby authorized to erect a line or lines of magnetic telegraph between the Missouri River and the city of San Francisco, in the State of California, on such route as they may select, to connect with the lines of the said United States Telegraph Company, now constructed, and being constructed through the states of the Union. The said company shall have the use of such unoccupied land of the United States as may be necessary for the right of way, and materials, and for the establishing of stations along said line for repairs, not exceeding at any station one quarter section of land; and such stations not to exceed one in fifteen miles on the average of the whole line, unless said lands shall be required by the government of the United States for railroad or other purposes: *And provided,* That no right to preëempt any of said lands under the laws of the United States shall enure to said company or their agents, or any other person or persons whatsoever.

The United States Telegraph Company may erect lines between the Missouri River and San Francisco, to connect with other lines.

Right of way &c.

Stations.

No right to preëmption.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That the said United States Telegraph Company, under the direction of the President of the United States,

Line of telegraph from Fort Hall to Portland, Oregon, &c.

is hereby authorized to erect a line of telegraph from Fort Hall, by Walla-Walla and the Dalles and San Francisco to Portland, in the State of Oregon, and from Fort Hall to Bannock and Virginia City, in the Territory of Idaho, with the same privileges as to the right of way, and so forth, as is provided in the first section of this act; the United States to have priority in the use of said lines of telegraph to Oregon and Idaho.

This company may send, &c., despatches over other lines, upon, &c.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted*, That the aforesaid company is authorized by this act to send and receive despatches on payment of the regular charges for transmission of despatches over any line that may now or hereafter be constructed by the authority or aid of congress, to connect with any line or lines authorized or erected by the Russian or English governments, and that all despatches received by said line or lines shall be transmitted in the order of their reception, and the answers thereto shall be delivered to said United States Telegraph Company for transmission over their lines to the office whence the original message was sent, whenever so directed by the sender thereof.

Despatches to be transmitted in order of reception.

Certain railroad companies may make arrangements with this telegraph company. 1862, ch. 120. Vol. xii. p. 489.

SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted*, That the several railroad companies authorized by act of congress July one, eighteen hundred and sixty-two, are authorized to enter into arrangements with the United States Telegraph company so that the line of telegraph between the Missouri River and San Francisco may be made upon and along the line of said railroad and branches as fast as said roads and branches are built, and if said arrangements be entered into and the transfer of said telegraph line be made in accordance therewith to the line of said railroads and branches, such transfer shall, for all purposes of the act referred to, be held and considered a fulfilment on the part of said railroad companies of the provision of the act in regard to the construction of a telegraph line; and, in case of disagreement, said telegraph company are authorized to remove their line of telegraph along and upon the line of railroad therein contemplated, without prejudice to the rights of said railroad companies.

APPROVED, July 2, 1864.

July 2, 1864.

CHAP. CCXXI. — *An Act in Relation to the Sale of Reservations of the Public Lands.*

Minimum price may be fixed for reservations, &c.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That whenever any reservation of public lands shall be brought into market under existing laws, it shall be lawful for the commissioner of the general land-office to fix a minimum price, not less than one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre, below which such lands shall not be disposed of.

APPROVED, July 2, 1864.

July 2, 1864.

CHAP. CCXXII. — *An Act relating to the Law of Evidence in the District of Columbia.*

Parties and persons interested may be witnesses in civil suits in the District of Columbia.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That on the trial of any issue joined, or of any matter or question, or on any inquiry arising in any suit, action, or other proceeding in any court of justice in the District of Columbia, or before any person having by law, or by consent of parties, authority to hear, receive, and examine evidence within said District, the parties thereto, and the persons in whose behalf any such action or other proceeding may be brought or defended, and any and all persons interested in the same, shall, except as hereinafter excepted, be competent and compellable to give evidence, either viva voce or by deposition, according to the practice of the court, on behalf of either or any of the parties to the said action or other proceeding: *Provided*, That nothing herein contained shall render any person who is charged with any offence in any criminal proceeding competent or compellable to give evidence for or against himself or herself, or shall render any person compellable to

Limitations to the rule.