

June 7, 1878.

**CHAP. 161.**—An act making further appropriations for continuing the improvements of Galveston Harbor, State of Texas.

Appropriation.  
Galveston Har-  
bor.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the sum of seventy-five thousand dollars be, and the same is hereby, appropriated, out of any moneys not otherwise appropriated, for the purpose of continuing the improvements of Galveston Harbor, in the State of Texas; which improvements are now being prosecuted under the direction of the Secretary of War, and the appropriation for which is substantially exhausted; and that the said sum be expended under his direction.

Approved, June 7, 1878.

June 7, 1878.

**CHAP. 162.**—An act regulating the appointment of justices of the peace, commissioners of deeds, and constables within and for the District of Columbia, and for other purposes.

District of Co-  
lumbia.  
Justices of the  
peace.  
Appointment.  
Number.

Term.  
Jurisdiction.

Unfinished busi-  
ness.

Transcripts of  
unfinished busi-  
ness.

Succession to  
dockets.

Justices now in  
office.  
Term.

Deposit of dock-  
ets.

Constables.  
Appointment.  
Term.

Constables now  
in office.

Bonds of justices  
and constables.

*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 shall nominate and, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoint fifteen justices of the peace within and for the District of Columbia. Said justices of the peace shall be assigned as follows: two in the city of Georgetown, one in Tennallytown, one in Brightwood, one in Uniontown, and ten in the city of Washington. Their term of office shall be four years, subject to removal for cause. They shall respectively have the jurisdiction, exercise the powers and functions, and perform the duties as now provided by law for said officers respectively. Said justices of the peace, shall be the successors of the justices of the peace who now hold office in said District, and shall proceed in and close up all such unfinished business of their predecessors as may be brought to their attention by any party in interest, who shall present a transcript of the same, as hereinafter provided. And in like manner they shall proceed in and close up all unfinished business of any predecessor in office appointed under this act. Upon resignation or the expiration of the term of office, they shall make, certify, and deliver transcripts of any proceeding on their docket to any party in interest, or shall deliver said docket, together with all papers in all unfinished business, to their successors in office, at their option, and account for all moneys in their hands. Upon the death or removal of any justice of the peace appointed under this act, his docket, books, and papers of office shall be delivered to his immediate successor in office.

**SEC. 2.** The terms of office of all justices of the peace, now in office within and for the District of Columbia shall end on the thirtieth day after the approval of this act. They shall issue no process returnable on or after that day, and shall deposit their docket, books, papers, and records pertaining to their office in the office of the clerk of the supreme court of the District of Columbia, who shall, on demand of the parties in interest, deliver to them transcripts, duly certified, together with all papers left or filed with them by said parties in said case or proceeding.

**SEC. 3.** The supreme court of the District shall have authority to appoint not exceeding twenty constables, who shall hold office for four years, subject to be removed by said court for cause, upon hearing. And said constables shall be the successors of the constables now holding office in the said District. The term of office of all constables now in office in said District shall end on the thirtieth day after the approval hereof, and they shall, on or before said day, return all process which may be held by them duly executed (except as hereafter provided), and pay over to the proper parties all moneys in their hands; all constables may duly execute and return all writs and processes in their hands at the time of such expiration of their term of office.

**SEC. 4.** The supreme court of the District of Columbia shall have the power to fix the amount and form of the bonds, and approve the same, to be given by said justices of the peace and constables, and make

such further regulations as may be necessary to complete the transfer of the existing business from the present justices of the peace to those appointed under this act, and for the return of any writ, execution, or other process by the present justices of the peace to those appointed under this act, and may remove constables from office for willful violation of law, or for misconduct, or for incompetency.

Transfer of business.

Removal of constables.

Commissioners of deeds.  
Appointment.

SEC. 5. The President of the United States is hereby authorized to appoint as many commissioners of deeds throughout the United States as he may deem necessary, with powers to take the acknowledgment of deeds for the conveyance of property within the said District, administer oaths, and take depositions in cases pending in the courts of said District in the manner prescribed by law; to whose acts, properly attested by their hands and seals of office, full faith and credit shall be given. The President shall also have power to appoint such number of notaries public, residents of said District, as in his discretion the business of the District may require; said commissioners of deeds and notaries public to hold their offices for the period of five years, removable at discretion.

Notaries public.

Term.

SEC. 6. All laws and parts of laws inconsistent with any of the provisions of this act be, and the same are hereby repealed.

Approved, June 7, 1878.

CHAP. 168.—An act explanatory of section eighteen hundred and eighty-nine of the Revised Statutes of the United States, and to ratify and confirm certain Territorial legislation, and for other purposes.

June 8, 1878.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the words "the legislative assemblies of the several Territories shall not grant private charters or special privileges" in section eighteen hundred and eighty-nine of the Revised Statutes of the United States shall not be construed as prohibiting the legislative assemblies of the several Territories of the United States from creating towns, cities, or other municipal corporations, and providing for the government of the same, and conferring upon them the corporate powers and privileges, necessary to their local administration, by either general or special acts; and that all general and special acts of such legislative assemblies heretofore passed creating and providing for the government of towns, cities, or other municipal corporations, and conferring such rights, powers and privileges upon the same, as were necessary to their local administration, be, and the same are hereby, ratified and confirmed and declared to be valid, any law to the contrary notwithstanding, subject, however, to amendment or repeal hereafter by such Territorial assemblies. But nothing herein shall have the effect to create any private right, except that of holding and executing municipal offices, or to divest any such right, or to make valid or invalid any contract or obligation heretofore made by or on behalf of any such town, city or other municipal corporation, or to authorize any such corporation to incur hereafter any debt or obligation other than such as shall be necessary to the administration of its internal affairs.

Municipal corporations in Territories.  
R. S. 1889, p. 333,  
Construed.

Private rights.

Contracts.  
Corporation debts.

Approved, June 8, 1878.

CHAP. 169.—An act to provide for circuit and district courts of the United States at Toledo, Ohio.

June 8, 1878.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That a term of the circuit court and district court for the northern district of Ohio shall be held at Toledo, in said State, on the first Tuesday of the months of June and December in each year; and one grand jury and one petit jury only shall be summoned, and serve in both of said courts at each term thereof. And the existing provisions of law fixing the times of holding the district court at Toledo are hereby repealed.

Circuit and district courts at Toledo, Ohio.  
Terms.  
Juries.