

MARINE CONDENSERS.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY,

TRANSMITTING

*A communication on the subject of condensers.*

MARCH 3, 1851.

Ordered to be printed.

NAVY DEPARTMENT, *February 5, 1851.*

SIR: By a clause in the naval appropriation act approved September 28, 1850, the Secretary of the Navy was authorized "to examine into the merits of the various condensers for supplying the boilers of marine engines with fresh water; and that he report to this House, at its next session, the result of said examination, together with his opinion as to the value of the best of said condensers to the government of the United States;" and the sum of five thousand dollars was appropriated to carry into effect this provision.

In compliance therewith, I constituted a commission, to meet at the navy-yard in Philadelphia on the 16th of December last, to make the examination directed, for the advice and information of the department, and advertised all claimants for condensers of the above description to present them for examination accordingly.

The commissioners met at the time and place indicated, and proceeded to the investigation. But, for reasons set forth in the accompanying letter, they have requested an enlargement of the time allowed for making their report beyond the present session of Congress. Having communicated a copy of this letter to the Committees on Naval Affairs of the two houses of Congress, and finding that they disagree in opinion on the question of allowing longer time for the examination and report in question, I submit the request made by the commissioners for the decision of Congress.

I have only to remark that, inasmuch as the subject involves questions of mechanical and chemical science, and their proper solution is a matter of great practical importance, on which much may depend in the efficiency and economy of the naval service, the department would prefer a thorough investigation, so as to settle, as far as possible, the entire subject referred.

I am, with the utmost respect, your obedient servant,

WILL. A. GRAHAM.

Hon. HOWELL COBB,

*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

PHILADELPHIA, *January 16, 1851.*

SIR: Unless it should be deemed indispensable for the department to have immediately a report on such plans of marine condensers as have been submitted to us, we have the honor to suggest that we be allowed to pursue the investigation without reference to the termination of the session of Congress.

This suggestion is in view both of enabling us to make such a comprehensive and thorough research as seems desirable, and also of the actual state of the plans, &c., of condensers which are before us. One party, for instance, has just asked for three weeks' time to allow the completion of a working model; the vessel of another, expected in New York about this date, has not yet arrived; and a steamer which is being fitted out for a third, with special apparatus, intended to assist our very examination, will not be ready, we are informed, until some time in March.

We shall be happy, however, to conform to any order which the department may see fit to take in the premises, and, meanwhile, have the honor to be, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servants,

JOHN C. CRESSON.

J. H. ALEXANDER.

The Hon. the SECRETARY OF THE NAVY,  
 &c., &c., &c.