"The President is of opinion that it is a great abuse to bring the patronage of the General Government into conflict with the freedom of elections; and that this abuse ought to be corrected wher[illegible]er it may have been [illegible]mitted to exist, and to be prevented for the future.

"He therefore directs that information be given to all officers and agents in your department of the public service, that partisan interference in popular elections, whether of State officers or officers of this Government, and for whomsoever or against whomsoever it may be exercised, or the payment [illegible]r contribution or assessment on salaries or official compensation, for party or election purposes, will be regarded by him as cause for removal.

"It is not intended that any officer shall be restrained in the free and proper expression and maintenance of his opinions respecting public men or public measures, or in the exercise, to the fullest degre[illegible] of the constitutional right of suffrage. But persons employed under the Government, and paid for their services out of the public Treasury, are not expected to take an active or officious part in attempts to influence the minds or votes of others; such conduct being deemed inconsistent with the spirit of the Constitution and the duties of public agents acting under it; and the President is resolved, so far as depends upon him, that while the exercise of the elective franchise by the people shall be free from undue influences of official station and authority, opinion shall also be free among the officers and agents of the Government.

"The President wishes it further to be announced and distinctly understood, that from all collecting and disbursing officers, promptitude in rendering accounts, and entire punctuality in paying balances, will be rigorously exacted. In his opinion, it is time to return, in this respect, to the early practice of the Government, and to hold any degree of delinquency on the part of those entrusted with the public money, just cause of immediate removal. He deems the severe observance of this [illegible]ule [illegible] be essential [illegible] the pu[illegible] service, [illegible] dollar lost to the Treasury by unfaithfulness in office creates a ne[illegible] a new charg[illegible]on the Peo[illegible]