TWENTY-NINTH CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION.

SATURDAY, March 14, 1846.

The Senate did not sit to-day.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

The journal of yesterday was read and approved.

The SPEAKER said the business first in order would be the call of the committees for reports.

VALUE OF COINS.

On motion of Mr. J. R. INGERSOLL, the House proceeded to the consideration of the bill, heretofore reported but informally laid over, "further to amend an act supplementary to an act to fix the value of certain money of account at the custom-house in the United States for computing the duties on imports."

After a few words from Mr. GRINNELL, the bill was read a third time, and passed.

The SPEAKER then proceeded to call the committees for reports.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES.

Mr. THOMAS SMITH, from the Committee on Public Lands, to which was referred the bill to grant the right of the pre-emption to actual settlers on the lands acquired by treaty from the Miami Indians in Indiana, reported an amendatory bill, accompanied by a report in writing.

Mr. S. wished the bill to take its place on the calendar.

Mr. POLLOCK moved its commitment.

Mr. CATHCART remarked that he should take the present occasion to call the attention of the House to this bill. It provided for granting the right of pre-emption to the settlers upon these lands, at two dollars per acre. He must admit that he regretted that the Committee on Public Lands deemed it necessary to place the minimum above $1 25. He could see no reason why the settlers upon one side of an imaginary line, should be charged $2 per acre, while equally good, and often better land was granted on the the other side at $1 25. He felt that he need not, at this day, use any argument to prove the beneficial operation of our general pre-emption system. That system does not operate injuriously upon the interests of the government, while it prevents those combinations among speculators by which both the government is immediately wronged, and her interests outraged by robbing her best citizens of their fondly-cherished homes.

Mr. C. said he had the honor to represent the settlers for whose relief this bill was intended. He had settled many years ago among a similar population, and he felt happy here to be enabled to say that they were a noble, generous-hearted race, whom to know was to respect. Mr. C. would therefore respectfully beseech, on the part of the members of the House, a careful examination of the report and bill, and he would then feel assured that when the bill was reached, being understood, it would receive their approval.

The bill was referred to the Committee of the Whole, and the bill and report ordered to be printed.

After a few words from Messrs. POLLOCK and SMITH, the bill was referred to the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, and ordered to be printed.

PRIVATE.

Mr. SEAMAN, from the Committee on Revolutionary Pensions, made a report upon the case of Mary Campbell, accompanied by a bill for her relief; which bill was read twice, and committed.

Mr. SEDDON, from the Committee on Invalid Pensions, made a report upon the petition of Lewis Lavy, accompanied by a bill for his relief; which bill was read twice, and committed.

Mr. SEAMAN, from the Committee on Revolutionary Pensions, made adverse reports upon the cases of Edward Smith, of Abner Watson, and of John Murphy; which reports were laid upon the table.

Mr. SEDDON, from the Committee on Invalid Pensions, made a report upon the petition of Wm. Gump, accompanied by a bill for his relief; which bill was read twice, and committed.

Mr. JENKINS, from the Committee on Revolutionary Pensions, made a report upon the case of Lenk Gray, accompanied by a bill for his relief; which bill was read twice, and committed.

The House proceeded to the consideration of the motion made by Mr. RATHBUN, on the 21st of February last, to reconsider the vote by which the bill from the Senate entitled an act to authorize the Secretary of the Treasuary to make an arrangement or compromise with Mangle M. Quackenboss and his co-obligors, or any of them, for claims on bonds given by them as sureties to the United States, was laid upon the table; and the question being put, "Shall the said vote be reconsidered?" and it was decided in the affirmative

So the vote was reconsidered; and on motion of Mr. RATHBUN, ordered that the said bill be recommitted to the Committee on the Judiciary.

TREATY STIPULATIONS.

Mr. C. J. INGERSOLL, from the Committee on Foreign Affairs, reported a bill more effectually to provide for the enforcement of certain provisions in the treaties of the United States, accompanied by a report; which bill was read twice and committed.

TONNAGE DUTIES, &c.

Mr. I. also, from the same committee, made a report to accompany the bill to repeal that part of the act of the 30th August, 1842, which imposes a duty of 20 per cent. ad valorem on Java coffee, and to refund the discriminating tonnage duties levied on Spanish vessels, except those from Cuba and Porto Rico by the act of the 31st July, 1832, reported on the 16th of January last, and committed to the Committee of the whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. I. moved that the said bill be made the special order for Tuesday, the 21st of April next, to take precedence of all other business until disposed of; which motion was agreed to.

THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

Mr. HOPKINS, from the Committee on the Post Office and Post Roads, reported a bill to repeal the 20th and part of the 31st sections of the act to change the organization of the Post Office Department, and to provide more effectually for the settlement of the accounts thereof, approved 2d July, 1836; which bill was read a first and second time, and postponed far the present.

PRIVATE.

Mr. MORSE, from the Committee on Private Land Claims, made an adverse report upon the memorial of Pierre Chauteau, jr., and others, for a confirmation of the title to certain lands known as the Dubuque claim, in Iowa; which report was laid upon the table.

THE PRIVATE CALENDAR.

Whilst the SPEAKER was calling the committees, Mr. DANIEL rose and said, that, looking to the short time allotted to private bills, he felt constrained to move that the House now proceed to the private orders of the day.

The motion was rejected.

THE CUMBERLAND ROAD.

Mr. ROBERT SMITH offered the following resolution:

Resolved, That the House bill making an appropriation of $400,000 for the continuation of the Cumberland road in the States of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, be made the special order of the day for Monday, the 23d instant; then to take precedence of all other business.

Mr. S. was proceeding to say, that the bill stood early on the calendar, and that he hoped the House would allow an opportunity to its friends, to determine its fate, whatever that might be—

When the SPEAKER said no remarks were in order, as the resolution was one which related to priority of business.

Mr. G. S. HOUSTON moved that the resolution be laid on the table.

Mr. ROBERT SMITH asked the yeas and nays on that motion, and again urged upon the courtesy of the House, that the friends of the bill might have an opportunity of knowing what its fate was to be.

At the request of Mr. OWEN, Mr. SMITH modified his resolution so as to make it the special order for the 3d Monday in April. Vote for 69, against 52; not being two-thirds, lost.

The yeas and nays were ordered on the motion of Mr. HOUSTON, and, being taken, resulted as follows:

YEAS—Messrs. Anderson, Atkinson, Barringer, Bayly, Benton, Biggs, James A. Black, Brinkerhoff, Reuben Chapman, Clarke, Cobb, Cocke, Collin, Cullom, Daniel, J. Davis, Dixon, Dobbin, Dunlap, Erdman, Edwin H. Ewing, Giles, Gordon, Graham, Grover, Hoge, Hopkins, George S. Houston, Hungerford, Hunter, Jenkins, James H. Johnson, Andrew Johnson, Seaborn Jones, Thomas Butler King, Lawrence, Leake, La Sere, Marley, McClean, James McDowell, McKay, Barclay Martin, Morse, Moulton, Norris, Payne, Rathbun, Reid, Ritter, Roberts, Sawtelle, Scammon, Seddon, St. John, Wheaton, Wood, Yancey and Yost—59.

NAYS—Messrs. Abbott, Arnold, Ashmun, Baker, Milton Brown, Wm. G. Brown, Buffington, Wm. W. Campbell, Jno. H. Campbell, Carroll, Cathcart, Cranston, Crozier, Cummins, Dockery, John H. Ewing, Faran, Ficklin, Foot, Giddings, Grider, Grinnell, Hampton, Harper, Henley, Herrick, Elias B. Holmes, John W. Houston, Washington Hunt, Charles J. Ingersoll, Joseph R. Ingersoll, Kennedy, Daniel P. King, Lewis, McClelland, McLernand, Joseph J. McDowell, McGaughey, McHenry, Marsh, Miller, Moseley, Owen, Parish, Perry, Phelps, Pollock, Ramsey, Relfe, John A. Rockwell, Sawyer, Seaman, Severance, Leonard H. Sims, Truman Smith, Albert Smith, Thomas Smith, Robert Smith, Starkweather, Stewart, Strohm, Sykes, Benjamin Thompson, Tibbatts, Trumbo, Vinton, Wentworth, Winthrop, and Yell—69.

So the resolution was not laid on the table.

And the question recurring on its adoption—

Tellers were ordered.

Mr. S. JONES asked the yeas and nays, but as the House was dividing at the time, the question on the demand was not taken.

And the question on the resolution was then taken, and decided in the negative—ayes 69; noes 52.

So, two-thirds not voting in the affirmative, the resolution was rejected.

A PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. BAYLY moved that the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union; but withdrew the motion at the request of

Mr. YANCEY, who asked leave to make a personal explanation.

And the leave having been granted—

Mr. YANCEY said that yesterday, in the heat of debate, and when somewhat irritated by having had an unjust charge made upon him, he had retorted by denominating those members of the democratic party who advocated the expenditure of public money for "a general system of internal improvements," as "pretended democrats." I regret, sir, (continued Mr. Y.,) that I used the phrase. I regret that I too frequently, in the excitement of a general debate, use language that reflection convinces me were better left unused. It is ever my pride, if by it I do injustice, to rectify it. In this instance, as I had no standard by which to judge of the truth of the remark I made, I should not have made it. However much I may regret and disapprove of the course of democrats here in sustaining a bill which I must think clearly violates both the constitution and the resolutions of the Balumore convention, it is not for me to judge of the motives which lead them to do so, or of the sincerity with which they advocate the democratic platform. That I must leave to their own consciences, their God, and their constituency.

Mr. YANCEY renewed the motion of Mr. BAYLY, but waived it (Mr. BAYLY assenting) at the request of

Mr. DOUGLASS, who (under leave of the House) was understood to say—

I will only say that if I used the word "pretended" democrats, I do not think I used it; but—

Mr. YANCEY. I used it.

Mr. DOUGLASS. If I did—though I do not think I did—I equally withdraw it.

RIVERS AND HARBORS.

The question having then been taken on the motion of Mr. BAYLY, and decided in the affirmative, the House again resolved itself into Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, (Mr. THOMAS SMITH, of Indiana, in the chair,) and resumed the consideration of the bill making appropriations for the improvement of certain harbors and rivers, and the amendments thereto pending.

Mr. JOHN W. HOUSTON (who was entitled to the floor) addressed the committee briefly. He did not intend (he said) to enter into a discussion of the various topics which had been introduced into the debate. His main object was to explain the propriety and expediency of making certain amendments which he desired to have read for information, and which he intended at the proper time to offer. They were read as follows:

Amend the 77th and 78th lines, which contain an appropriation of $15,000 for improving the harbor at New Castle, Delaware, by striking out the said sum of $15,000 and inserting in lieu thereof $40,000.

Also amend the 81st and 82d lines of the bill, which contain an appropriation of $75,000 for completing the Delaware breakwater, by striking out the said sum of $75,000, and inserting in lieu thereof $100,000.

There were several other important points (Mr. H. said) upon the waters of the Delaware bay and river which had been entirely overlooked in the provisions of this bill, which, in his judgment, were eminently deserving of the attention of the committee and of the general government, and to provide for which he should offer amendments, if he could flatter himself with the slightest hope that they would beentertained. Mr. H. then proceeded to make a brief statement of facts in relation to the expediency of the amendments he had proposed; and urged their claims upon the fair and impartial, if not favorable consideration of the committee.

Mr. BAKER gave notice of his intention to offer an amendment, making an appropriation of $75,000 for the Illinois river. He did not propose, he said, to discuss the constitutional and party questions that had been drawn into this debate. He was fortunately of that poor and despised company whose opinions on this question were well known. Fortunately he did not need to refer to the opinions of leading men, and attempt to torture them into an argument favorable to the one side or the other, to jusify his vote. He was in favor of the largest construction of the constitution in relation to internal improvements, and more especially, as a western man, he was able to justify his vote before the people of the country and before his own immediate constituents. But he would ask the attention of the committee to a matter which referred to his immediate constituents, and to the people of Illinois; for he expected to do them no real, practical good on this floor, other than as he might be able to get the attention of the committee to the amendment he had proposed.

Mr. B. then proceeded briefly to explain the object of the amendment, and to urge its claims upon the consideration of the committee.

Mr. BAYLY obtained the floor, and yielded to

Mr. SEDDON, who gave notice of his intention, when in order, to offer an amendment.

Mr. BAYLY, in the few remarks he desired to submit to the committee, should say nothing of the Oregon question, which he thought had been so improperly lugged into this debate. Declining also to enter into the discussion of other incidental topics which had been introduced, he proceeded briefly to the consideration of the subject before the House. In his opinion, this government had no power to construct internal improvements either with or without the consent of the States. This government was one of delegated powers, possessing no powers except those expressly delegated or absolutely necessary to carry into effect expressly delegated powers; and it was as well a government of delegated means as of delegated powers. Understanding the constitution in this way, he had looked through its provisions in vain for a solitary one that could sanction this system of internal improvements by the general government.

As clear as he was upon the constitutional question, he was still more so upon the question of expediency. Not only was the power to construct internal improvements not delegated, and not designed to be delegated, to this government, but it was expressly refused; and it was a great stroke of wisdom that this power was withheld. This Congress, from its very composition—from the extent of country over which it legislates, would be utterly incompetent to legislate wisely upon the subject. The States, with their superior advantages of an intimate knowledge of the country, with the restraints of direct taxation for the supply of their respective treasuries, &c., had, notwithstanding, been plunged into bankruptcy and oppressive indebtedness; and the effects of this system, if adopted by the general government, would be in a greater degree disastrous.

Mr. B. touched upon one or two other points; and having thus briefly disposed of the subject immediately under consideration, in reply to the speech of Mr. HUDSON in reference to the effect which the modification or repeal of the English corn laws will have upon the agricultural interests of our country, he entered into a minute investigation of statistics and facts in exposure of what he considered the fallacious arguments and the erroneous conclusions to which the gentleman from Massachusetts had arrived.

[This speech, like those of other gentlemen, will be given hereafter.]

Mr. STEWART then obtained the floor, and addressed the committee during the hour. He directed his argument mainly to two points, first to the constitutional power to make these improvements, and secondly to the expediency of its exercise. He insisted on the existence of the power, and argued the expediency of its adoption.

Mr. S. devoted the remainder of his hour to the discussion of the tariff, in reply to Mr. BAYLY, and in defence of the existing tariff, dilating upon what he considered the deceptive promises of benefit to the United States from the proposed change in the English corn-laws, and upon the disastrous results which would ensue upon a repeal of the existing tariff, or a substitution therefor of the bill of the Secretary of the Treasury, under which, if it went into operation, he predicted that eighteen months would not elapse before there would not be a specie-paying bank in the country.

In the course of his remarks he gave way for explanation to Messrs. BAYLY and LEAKE.

Mr. E. H. EWING obtained the floor, but yielded to a motion that the committee rise; which prevailing, the committee rose, and

The House adjourned.

The following petitions and memorials were presented under the rule, and referred to the appropriate committees:

By Mr. JOHN A. ROCKWELL: The petition of L. U Blood, and twenty-two other citizens of Mystic, in the State of Connecticut, praying for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia: referred to the Committee for the District of Columbia. The papers in the case of the late Elisha Tracey, of Norwich, Connecticut, asking Congress for additional pay, also moved that the petition and other papers be taken from the files of the House of Representatives, and referred to the Committee of Claims.

By Mr. S. D. HUBBARD: The petition of John R. Crone and sixty-two other citizens of Middletown, in the State of Connecticut, petitioning Congress to provide that a convention of nations may be assembled to form a code of national laws, by which the varying interests may be preserved.

By Mr. R. SMITH: Additional evidence in support of the claim of Peter Shaffer: referred to the Committee of Claims.

The petition of 200 citizens of Union county, Illinois, praying an appropriation for the national armory at Fort Massac: referred to the Committee on Military Affairs.

By Mr. HOPKINS: The memorial of Mrs. Mary Bentley, widow of Col. Wm. Bentley, asking to be allowed the same remuneration for the services of her husband in the war of the revolution, which has been allowed to the widows of other officers who were married prior to 1794.

By Mr. POLLOCK: The petition of Simon Hawley, and forty-six others, citizens of Lycoming county, Pennsylvania, remonstrating against any alteration or reduction of the tariff act of 1842.

By Mr. JAMES B. HUNT: The petition of T. H. Lyon, and two hundred and three other citizens of the Grand River valley, Michigan, praying for the establishment of a mail-route from Grand rapids, Michigan, to Milwaukie, in the Territory of Wisconsin.

By Mr. J. G. CHAPMAN: The memorial of Geo. Coombs, executor of Cornelius Manning, asking payment for an exported slave. The memorial of many masters and owners of vessels, asking an appropriation for the erection of a beacon light at the mouth of Annapolis harbor.

By Mr SCHENCK: The memorial of D. Dodge, F. Campbell, R. Moody, and S. D. Dakin, and others, of New York, in relation to the construction of sectional floating dry-docks, basins, and railways at Pensacola and other naval stations.

By Mr. McLERNAND: The memorial of citizens of the State of Illinois, praying a donation of land to aid in the support of a deaf and dumb asylum in Jacksonville, in said State: referred to the Committee on Public Lands. The memorial of citizens of the State of Illinois, praying a donation of land to aid in the establishment of a lunatic asylum in Jacksonville, in said State: referred to the Committee on Public Lands.

By Mr. SCAMMON: The petition of Richard Palmer, for arrearages of pension: referred to the Committee on Invalid Pensions.

By Mr. SYKES: The memorial of the Perth Amboy Manufacturing Company of New Jersey, relative to the purchase of a patent for manufacturing mail-locks: referred to the Committee on the Post Office and Post Roads.

By Mr. McCONNELL: The memorial of the Hon. Garrard Stiff, of Cedar Bluff, Alabama, praying Congress to buy his copyright of The Lady of the Peak, a national romance; or, The Foundling of a Cave.

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By the author of "The Texan Emigrant," "Romance of Virginia," "Murder in Cedar Bluff," &c., &c.

By Mr. HOUGH: The petition of citizens of the counties of Oswego and Jefferson, New York, for an appropriation for the continuance of the public works at the mouth of Salmon river, on Lake Ontario: referred to the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union.

By Mr. McCRATE: The petition of Warren Rice, and forty-seven others, citizens of Wiscasset, Maine, asking Congress to provide some means for the peaceful settlement of national disputes, and thus avoid the evils of war.

By Mr. DOBBIN: The petition of the heirs of Capt. John Slaughter, of the North Carolina continental line, for commutation.

By Mr. B. MARTIN: The petition of Thomas Davis, of Lawrence county, Tennessee, for an increase of revolutionary pension: referred to the Committee on Revolutionary Pensions.

By Mr. FICKLIN: The petition of James K. Scott, of Dewitt county, and eighty-eight others, praying the establishment of a weekly mail-route from Decatur, Macon county, through Clinton, the county seat of Dewitt county, to Bloomington, in McLean county: referred to the Committee on the Post Office and Post Roads.

Mr. Hunter, who has been detained from the House for some time by indisposition, resumed his seat to-day.

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Passage to and from Great Britain and Ireland (via Liverpool) by the Old Black Ball Line, or any of the regular packet-ships sailing every five days.

THE subscribers in calling the attention of old countrymen and the public generally to their unequalled arrangements for bringing out passengers from the old country, beg to state that the business of the house at Liverpool will be conducted by its branch.

Those sending for their friends will at once see the great importance of this arrangement, as it will preclude an unnecessary delay of the emigrant. The ships employed in this line are well known to be the first and largest class, commanded by men of experience; and as they sail every five days, offer every facility that can be furnished. With those superior arrangements, the subscribers look forward for a continuation of that patronage which has been so liberally extended to them for so many years past. In case any of those engaged do not embark, the passage money will be refunded as customary. For further particulars, apply by letter, postpaid.

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Liverpool.

N. B.—Drafts for any amount can as usual be furnished, payable at all the principal banking institutions throughout the United Kingdom, on application as above. March 14—1y

THE MUTUAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY of New York, No. 56 Wall street. Net amount of accumulated premiums, $215,571. This company is organized on the purely mutual principle, and its business is restricted by the charter to the insurance of lives, and granting annuities and endowments.

It commenced, without capital, on the 1st of February, 1843. At the close of its second year, (31st January, 1845,) it had issued 1,086 policies, and its net accumulated premiums was $97,278. At the termination of the third year, on the 31st January, 1846, the whole number of policies issued was 2,133, and its net accumulated premiums, after paying all losses and expenses, was $215,571; thus exhibiting an increase during the last year of 1,047 policies issued, and $118,278 of accumulated funds, which is rapidly augmenting by an annual income of $250,000, growing out of original and renewed premiums and interest on investments.

This extraordinary success places the company in a strong position, and it now ranks among the safest institutions in the country.

Policy-holders participate in the whole of the profits, there being no proprietary interest or subscribed capital to absorb any portion thereof. An extensive and prosperous business promises large dividends on the first division of profits on the 1st of February, 1848, and persons now insuring will share in these profits if they survive that period.

The premiums are paid annually, and areas low as any American company, and lower than the English, with a participation in the profits. Policy holders are secured by investments in bonds and mortgages on real estate in the city of New York and Brooklyn, worth double the amount leaned thereon, and in stocks of the State and city of New York.

The transactions of this company are on the cash principle—consequently the survivors of parties insuring with it will not be subjected to the heavy drawback of accumulated premium notes; reducing the benefit of the assurance to a small pittance.

Persons may effect insurance on their own lives and the lives of others. A married woman can insure the life of her husband, which will enure to her sole use and that of her children.

Pamphlets explanatory of the principles of mutual life insurance, and illustrating its advantages, with forms of application, may be obtained at the office of the company, 56 Wall street, or of any of the agents.

TRUSTEES.

Morris Robinson,	John H. Smith,
Benj. D. Silliman,	Jos. B. Collins,
R. H. M'Curdy,	Jas. S. Wadsworth,
Rob't B. Minturn,	H. W. Hubbell,
C. W. Faber,	G. M. Wilkins,
M. Livingston,	L. V. L. Pruyn,
T. Sedgwick,	T. W. Olcott,
Stacy B. Collins,	Chas. Ely,
Wm. Barnwell,	F. G. Hallock,
Wm. Moore,	Rob't Schuyler,
Zebedee Cook,	Amos S. Perry,
Jona. Miller,	Jos. Tuckerman,
John C. Cruger,	Alfred Pell,
David Colden,	John C. Thatcher,
Rufus L. Lord,	W. S. Wetmore,
Joseph Blunt,	Isaac G. Pearson,
Gideon Hawley,	Wm. J. Bunker,
Two vacancies.	

MORRIS ROBINSON, President.
SAMUEL HANNAY, Secretary.
MINTURN POST, M. D., Physician to the company, 594 Broadway. March 14—1y

FEBRUARY REPORT OF THE MUTUAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY OF NEW YORK, No. 56 Wall st.—This institution, during the month of February, issued 109 new policies, viz:

To merchants and traders	40	To lawyers	3
To brokers	2	To clergymen	2
To manufacturers	8	To mechanics	15
To clerks	5	To pres'dts of banks	2
To stationers	1	To teller of a bank	1
To brewer	1	To student	1
To druggist	1	To keeper of a hotel	1
To gardener	1	To teachers	7
To planter	1	To ladies	8
To shipmaster	1	To gentlemen	1
To editor	1	Lives insured	109
To physicians	6		

MORRIS ROBINSON, President.
SAMUEL HANNAY, Secretary.
MINTURN POST, Physician, 594, Broadway. March 14—

BACKGAMMON BOARDS, cheap; well and strongly made and neatly finished; complete with backgammon men, dice, and dice boxes. Price one dollar. F. TAYLOR. March 14—

THE UNION

CITY OF WASHINGTON.

SATURDAY NIGHT, MARCH 14, 1846.

CONGRESSIONAL.

The *Senate* was not in session to-day.

The *House*, after receiving a few reports from committees, set aside the private orders of the day, and again went into committee on the river and harbor bill.

The correspondents of the "Boston Atlas" and "the New York Telegraph," are as reckless in their misrepresentations as they are coarse in their language. What they say of Mr. McLane, and the letter of instructions sent to him, and the negotiation being transferred to London, is false. The change in the cabinet (reported by other letter-writers) is the sheer invention of the gossips. We have denied it a hundred times before. We deny it again, because these rumors are calculated and intended to shake the confidence of the country in the stability of our public councils. The cabinet was never more firmly knit together. With what perfect disregard for truth is the following paragraph, as we find it in the New York Express of yesterday, put together!

"RUMORED CHANGE IN THE CABINET.—The Washington correspondent of the Gazette and Times says:

"'I have it from authority upon which I can implicitly rely, that Mr. Bancroft, having been advised to resign his office as Secretary of the Navy, and declining so to do, has received 'notice to quit,' and will in a few days be removed. Rumor says that Mr. Fairfield, of Maine, chairman of the Committee on Naval Affairs, of the Senate, and Mr. Mason, the capable Attorney General, are the candidates for the vacancy. Mr. Mason, I am inclined to think, will be the man.'"

There is not the slightest shadow of a foundation for any of these statements. It is false from beginning to end, and *we know it to be so.*

We have hitherto abstained from any allusion to the very extraordinary charge which appeared recently in a journal of this city, against certain members of the Senate. We had hoped that the Senate would take so notice of it. Our opinion is now, and has been from the first, that the charge in question did not require any positive contradiction. It carried contradiction, indeed, wherever it went, upon its face and in its terms. It was without even the shadow of credibility. We trusted, therefore, that, so far as the action of the Senate was concerned—and we resolved that so far as depended on this journal—the article in question should be left to the speedy forgetfulness which awaited it. We really saw no call for an investigation of the matter. No possible result of that investigation could, in our view, deepen or extend the public conviction that the charges of the article *are, and must be, from their very nature, altogether without foundation.* The idea of a dining-table compact between the British minister and a number of distinguished senators, stipulating beforehand their official action on the Oregon question, shocks all common sense. The thing is clearly impossible in itself, to say nothing of the manifest impossibility, that such a compact, if really made, should be disclosed in any credible shape.

We should not have advised any notice to be taken of this question in the Senate, much less the formal attention which it has received. The matter, however, has been noticed in that respectable body. It has been submitted to a committee of investigation, who will probably report upon it very soon. We leave it in their hands. But we hope to be excused for expressing a hope, that after the committee have discharged their duty, and the facts have been investigated, the Senate will permit the whole question to rest there. We can see no benefit to arise from any attempt to wreak its resentment upon the journal in question. The doctrine of contempt is a delicate and a dangerous one in a free government. It is liable to the gravest abuse, and in past times it has been abused even in this country. It is unnecessary, and perhaps inexpedient, to specify cases. This doctrine of punishment for contempt is useless just in proportion to the dignity and elevation of the body against which the contempt is committed.

THE MORMONS.

We have received a copy of "a circular of the high council" of twelve, dated at the city of Nauvoo on the 12th of January, which announces to the faithful that "we intend to send out into the western country from this place, some time in the early part of the month of March, a company of pioneers, consisting mostly of young hardy men, with some families. These are destined to be furnished with an ample outfit; taking with them a printing press, farming utensils of all kinds, with mill irons and bolting cloths, seeds of all kinds, grain, &c.

"The object of this early move, is to put in a spring crop, to build houses, and to prepare for the reception of families who will start so soon as grass shall be sufficiently grown to sustain teams and stock. Our pioneers are instructed to proceed west until they find a good place to make a crop, in some good valley in the neighborhood of the Rocky mountains, where they will infringe upon no one, and be not likely to be infringed upon. Here we will make a resting place, until we can determine a place for a permanent location. In the event of the President's recommendation to build block-houses and stockade forts on the route to Oregon, becoming a law, we have encouragements of having that work to do; and under our peculiar circumstances, we can do it with less expense to the government than any other people. We also further declare, for the satisfaction of some who have concluded that our grievances have alienated us from our country, that our patriotism has not been overcome by fire—by sword—by daylight nor by midnight assassinations, which we have endured; neither have they alienated us from the institutions of our country. Should hostilities arise between the government of the United States and any other power, in relation to the right of possessing the territory of Oregon, we are on hand to sustain the claim of the United States government to that country. It is geographically ours; and of right, no foreign power should hold dominion there; and if our services are required to prevent it, those services will be cheerfully rendered according to our ability. We feel the injuries that we have sustained, and are not insensible of the wrongs we have suffered; still we are Americans," &c.

"Much of our property will be left in the hands of competent agents for sale at a low rate, for teams, for goods, and for cash. The funds arising from the sale of property will be applied to the removal of families from time to time, as fast as consistent; and it now remains to be proven whether those of our families and friends, who are necessarily left behind for a season to obtain an outfit through the sale of property, shall be mobbed, burnt, and driven away by force. Does any American want the honor of doing it?—or will Americans suffer such acts to be done, and the disgrace of them to rest on their character under existing circumstances? If they will, let the world know it; but we do not believe they will."

ANOTHER SLAVER CAUGHT.

In addition to the barque Pons, the official account of whose capture we this day publish, we learn that another American vessel, supposed to be engaged in this infamous traffic, has been sent into the port of Charleston, South Carolina, for adjudication. This vessel is named the Panther; and is said to have sailed from Providence, Rhode Island, to Rio Janeiro, and thence, as usual with ships so employed, to the coast of Africa. It is stated that *she had made arrangements to receive on board 1,500 slaves!* We hope to publish the official account of her capture by the United States ship Yorktown in a few days.

Mr. Brockenbrough of Florida, has been confined to his room for some days by severe indisposition. But he was out yesterday, and hopes in a few days to resume his duties and his correspondence.

ATROCIOUS OUTRAGE.

The barque Pons, said to be of Philadelphia, presents the most appalling account of a slave-ship, the number of its slaves, and still more of its victims, which the atrocious annals of the slave-trade have recently exhibited. The blood runs cold at the recital. Never was a more inhuman massacre (as we may call it) perpetrated with more disgusting cruelty, and under the impulse of the vilest avarice. This infamous trade, whose horrors are illustrated by this appalling exhibition, calls loudly for the strongest chastisement. Some signal examples must be made under the act of Congress. The justice, the humanity of the nation—the spirit of the age, cries aloud for vengeance; and upon whom can it more properly fall than upon the present perpetrators? The act of May, 1820, condemns any citizen of the United States being of the crew or ship's company of any foreign vessel engaged in the slave-trade, or any person whatsoever, being of the crew or ship's company of any vessel owned in whole or in part, or navigated for, or in behalf of any citizen of the United States, &c., &c., *as a pirate*, to "be adjudged" as such; "and on conviction thereof before the circuit court of the United States for the district wherein he may be brought or found, shall suffer death." We cannot hesitate to believe for one moment that the Navy Department will do its duty in the premises, and the judicial authority of the United States will, by the most decided legal measures, avenge the violated laws of the country upon these pirates and murderers, if this case should fall within the purvew of the law. The evil ought to be arrested, if possible, by the punishment of such cold-blooded and avaricious monsters. Every person who is a party to it should be unmasked and punished in some form or other. What an appeal, too, does the wretched condition of the unhappy Africans make to the humanity of the people of the United States!

Our Philadelphia correspondent writes us that "the Pons, as well as the horrid traffic in which she was engaged, was not in the hands of citizens of this city." The Philadelphia United States Gazette has this paragraph:

"We are informed upon good authority that the barque Pons was sold at Rio de Janerio as a trader, by her owners, and that all interest in her on the part of Philadelphians, ceased some time since. Her former commander, Capt. Graham, under the Philadelphia owners, was, at last advices, lying sick at Rio de Janeiro, and intended to return to the city by the first opportunity. He could not therefore have been on board at the time of her capture."

OFFICIAL.

UNITED STATES SHIP YORKTOWN,
Kabinda, (Africa,) Dec. 16, 1845.

SIR: I have the honor to inform you that I addressed a letter to you on the 30th ultimo, giving an account of the capture of the American barque Pons, of Philadelphia, with eight hundred and ninety-six slaves on board, a duplicate of which I now enclose. I was so anxious to despatch the vessel in the shortest time for Liberia, in order to land the slaves, and relieve them from their miserable confinement, that it was not in my power to give you a more particular account of this vessel. I will now endeavor to do so, and also state some facts which have since come to my knowledge.

The Pons, under the command of James Berry, was at anchor at Kabinda for about twenty days before she took on board the slaves, during which time she was closely watched by her Britannic Majesty's brig Cygnet, Commander Layton. At about nine o'clock on the morning of the 27th November the Cygnet got under way and stood to sea. Immediately Berry gave up the ship to Gallano, who commenced getting on board the water, provisions, and slaves; and so expeditious were they in their movements, that at eight o'clock that evening the vessel was under weigh, having embarked nine hundred and three slaves. Instead of standing directly to sea, she kept in with the coast during the night. At daylight they were off Kacongo, about twenty-five miles to the north of Kabinda, when they discovered the Cygnet in the offing. They immediately furled all their sails, and drifted so near the shore, that the negroes lined the beach, in hope of a shipwreck. They continued in this situation until meridian, when, finding they had not been discovered, they set their lower sails in order to clear the shore, and as the Cygnet drew off from the land, they afterwards set their more lofty ones. Two days afterwards we captured her. Her crew consisted of Spaniards, Portuguese, Brazilians, and some from other countries, and although continuing under the American flag, with probably American papers, not one American was on board.

As I could not despatch her the evening of her capture, she kept company with us that night. The next morning I regretted to learn that eighteen had died, and one jumped overboard. So many dying in so short a time, was accounted for by the captain in the necessity he had of thrusting below all who were on deck and closing the hatches when he first fell in with us in order to escape detection.

The vessel has no slave-deck, and upwards of *eight hundred and fifty* were piled, almost in bulk, on the water-casks below; these were males; about forty or fifty females were confined in one-half of the round-house cabin on deck; the other half of the cabin remaining for the use of the officers. As the ship appeared to be less than three hundred and fifty tons, it seemed impossible that one-half could have lived to cross the Atlantic. About two hundred filled up the spar-deck alone, when they were permitted to come up from below, and yet the captain assured me that it was his intention to have taken *four hundred more* on board if he could have spared the time.

The stench from below was so great that it was impossible to stand more than a few moments near the hatchways. Our men who went below from curiosity, were forced up sick in a few minutes; then all the hatches were off. What must have been the sufferings of these poor wretches when the hatches were closed? I am informed that very often in these cases, the stronger will strangle the weaker; and this was probably the reason why so many died, or rather were found dead, the morning after the capture. None but an eye-witness can form a conception of the horrors these poor creatures must endure in their transit across the ocean.

I regret to say that most of this misery is produced by our own countrymen; they furnish the means of conveyance in spite of existing enactments; and although there are strong circumstances against Berry, the late master of the "Pons," sufficient to induce me to detain him, if I should meet with him, yet I fear neither he nor his employers can be reached by our present laws. He will no doubt make it appear that the "Pons" was beyond his control when the slaves were brought on board. Yet, from the testimony of the men who came over from Rio as passengers, there is no doubt the whole affair was arranged at Rio between Berry and Gallano before the ship sailed. These men state that the first place they anchored was at Onin, near the river Lagos, in the Bight of Benin; here they discharged a portion of their cargo, and *received on board a number of hogsheads or pipes filled with water.* These were stowed on the ground tier, and a tier of casks containing spirits were placed over them. *They were then informed that the vessel was going to Kabinda for a load of slaves.*

On their arrival at the latter place, the spirit was kept on board until a few days before Berry gave up the command, covering up the water-casks in order to elude the suspicions of any cruiser. For twenty days did Berry wait in the roadstead of Kabinda, protected by the flag of his country, yet closely watched by a foreign man-of-war, who was certain of his intention; but the instant that cruiser is compelled to withdraw for a few hours, he springs at the opportunity of enriching himself and owners, and disgracing the flag which had protected him.

As we are short-handed, I have shipped those men, much to their gratification, who came out as passengers in the Pons from Rio to Kabinda, in order that their testimony may be taken should Berry be in the United States on our return, and committed for trial. I have landed the balance of the prize crew here, with the exception of one who died of coast fever a few days after he came on board this ship.

I have the honor to be, sir,
With much respect,
Your obedient servant,
CHAS. H. BELL,
Commander.

To the Hon. GEORGE BANCROFT,
Secretary of the Navy of the United States,
Washington city.

From the Charleston News.

ARRIVAL OF SLAVERS.

The ship Panther, 77 days from Rabender, Africa, bound to Providence Rhode Island, under the charge of Passed Midshipman H. S. Newcomb, put in here yesterday in distress. The Panther is a prize to the United States ship Yorktown, Capt. C. H. Bell. She was captured in consequence of suspicions being entertained that she was engaged in the slave trade, and has been sent to the United States for trial. The Yorktown had also captured the American schooner Pantuxent, Capt. Davis, suspected of slaving, and put Lieut. W. Chandler on board as prize master, who sailed with his prize from Monrovia for New York on the 6th November. On the 30th November the Yorktown made a prize of the American barque Pons, commanded by a Portuguese, Capt. Gallani, and having 900 slaves on board. She was sent to Monrovia to land the negroes, under the charge of Lieut. R. S. Cogdell.

The schooner Robert Wilson, (of Baltimore,) Lieut. Chipman, commander, arrived this morning, 38 days from Port Praya, a prize to United States ship Jamestown—supposed to be engaged in the slave trade; sent to United States for trial.