WASHINGTON CITY.

THURSDAY MORNING, MAY 14, 1857.

OFFICIAL.

APPOINTMENTS BY THE PRESIDENT.

William J. Cullen, of Indiana, superintendent of Indian affairs for the northern superintendency, vice Francis Huebschmann, removed.

Andrew M. Fitch, of Michigan, agent for the Indians in Michigan, vice Henry C. Gilbert, resigned, to take effect on the 1st day of July, 1857.

INDIRECT TRADE OF THE UNITED STATES WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES—SWITZERLAND.

The commerce between the United States and foreign countries through the ports of third powers, or the indirect trade with nations or States principally that have but few or no sea-ports of their own, amounts annually to at least $70,000,000. Some of our most costly and important imports enter into this trade, and as they consist chiefly, if not exclusively, of manufactures and articles of luxury, they contribute to the annual sum of our customs revenue much more largely than the same value of imports introduced, in the direct trade, from countries having sea-ports of their own. Thus, in 1855, of a total value of $20,949,566, imported into the United States in the indirect trade, free goods amounted to the comparatively trifling figure of $913; and out of $36,970,000, the amount in value of our indirect trade in 1856, the sum of $62,412 only was assigned to goods entitled, under the tariff of 1846, to free entry. The countries with which the indirect trade of the United States is chiefly conducted are Switzerland, Prussia, Saxony, Bavaria, Wurtemburg, Baden, Hesse, Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach, Saxe-Meiningen, Hanover, Brunswick, Oldenburg, Nassau, and the free city of Frankfort-on-the-Main. In addition to these countries and States, with which our indirect trade is, to a great extent, a geographical necessity, it is rather an anomalous fact that while we receive annually through the ports of France the manufactures of Switzerland, amounting in value to about $4,000,000—in 1856 the actual sum was $5,564,173—we receive in like manner through the ports of England the manufactures of France to an amount which in 1856 reached as high as $7,381,661. Of this sum silk piece goods covered $4,656,397. We have, on a former occasion, alluded to the now almost universally exploded system of restrictions and differential duties which still oppresses the commercial industry of France, especially in its relations with the United States, and we illustrated its ruinous effect even upon the shipping interests of that empire itself by the introduction of several elaborately-prepared tables. The very fact which we have just stated—namely, that France sends her silks and brandies, amounting to over $7,000,000 a year, to a United States market through the ports of England, and also to the amount of $1,354,710 through the port of Bremen—should of itself awaken the attention of that government to the subject, and induce a thorough remodelling of its complicated and almost incomprehensible system of tariff legislation. Under the provisions of our old and still-existing treaty of 1822 with France a British or Bremen vessel has an advantage of about 93 cents a ton, of registered tonnage, over American vessels in the port of France, or French vessels in ports of the United States. The wonder is that the indirect trade between France and the United States is not much larger than it is.

But to return. We have given the countries between which and the United States indirect trade is the result of geographical position. The ports through which these movements are chiefly conducted are British, French, Belgian, Dutch, and the cities of Bremen and Hamburg.

The following tabular statement exhibits the total values of imports into the United States in the indirect trade during the past year:

Imported from—				
The Zollverien,	in the	indirect	trade	$16,491,427
Switzerland	"	"	"	8,368,074
Austria	"	"	"	443,326
France	"	"	"	8,824,025
Other countries	"	"	"	2,843,150
Total in 1856	"	"	"	36,970,002

Among all the countries which we have named as sharing in the indirect trade of the United States, there is none whose industrial progress is more absolutely at the mercy of third governments than that of our sister republic, the Swiss confederation. Without a single port which could give her an outlet to our markets, she must seek the ocean over the territory of some neighboring power. Her own frontier is cut off into six departments, at each of which there is a custom-house for the verification of exports and the collection of import duties. Through one or other of these custom-houses all merchandise destined for consumption or transit must pass; but the moment Swiss exports cross the frontiers of Switzerland they enter upon foreign territory, become subject to foreign taxation, and frequently to the culpable negligence or idle curiosity of foreign officials.

In illustration of this we have seen it officially stated that an invoice of accordeons passing over French territory was so much injured—owing, it was believed, to the mis-directed musical genius of the French inland custom-house officials—that the consignee in New York was obliged to expend some hundreds of dollars in repairs before they could be offered in market.

In reference to this vexatious drawback upon Swiss commerce with the United States, the State Department "Report on Commercial Relations," part 1, page 411, very properly suggests that "if Swiss manufacturers could have their goods destined for the United States finally examined and sealed (*plombé*) at the first French frontier custom-house—then to pass on to their final destination, under the protection of that seal, unopened, and consequently exempt from the re-examination and repacking which they undergo at each post—it is believed that the trade with the United States would all pass through Havre, instead of seeking, as is the case at present, the more circuitous and expensive routes, *via* Liverpool and other ports. Such a change in the French transit regulations would result in an annual augmentation in the general exchanges between the United States and Switzerland."

The United States has an important interest in this matter. We send annually to Switzerland our raw cotton, (about 20,000,000 pounds,) tobacco, (about 8,000,000 pounds,) dye-stuffs, grains, flour, tallow, lard, turpentine, tar, pitch, oil, &c., amounting to some $10,000,000, and receive in return silk, woollen and cotton goods, watches, jewelry, cutlery, mathematical and scientifical instruments, reaching annually in value to about the same amount.

In 1855 the duties collected at our custom-houses on the $7,778,132—the value from Switzerland that year—amounted to at least $2,000,000; and in 1856 upwards of $4,000,000 was added to our revenues from the same source. It is, therefore, earnestly to be desired, not only by the mercantile interests of our country as a matter of dollars and cents, but by every interest and every class of our fellow-citizens, who must naturally feel more than an ordinary interest in the industrial and general prosperity of our transatlantic sister republic, that France would so adapt her transitage regulations and tariffs of tolls to the exigencies of her inland neighbor as to make it the interest as well as the choice of Switzerland to regard French territory as the natural portage of her annually-increasing commerce. Under a more liberal arrangement the indirect trade between the United States and Switzerland, through the port of Havre, would in five years increase nearly 50 per cent.

SHOWING THEIR HANDS AGAIN.

Abolitionists and black republicans differ in name and the means adopted by them to attain the same ends. Their principles and objects are the same. The only real difference that we can perceive between the two parties is, that while the former are out-spoken traitors and infidels, the latter attempt to cloak their designs against the Union and the constitution by the demagogism of politics and the cant of false spiritual guides. The progressive steps, therefore, which may be taken by the abolitionists may be safely regarded as advance movements of the black republican party; and as the country at large may feel some curiosity as to the temper and programme of these mad, deluded, and deluding men since their signal rebuke last fall, and their still more signal rebuke at the spring elections this year, it may not prove altogether an unprofitable task to take a hasty glance at the proceedings of the Anti-slavery Society which is now holding its twenty-fourth anniversary meeting in the city of New York.

This meeting opened on Tuesday morning last with the notorious Lloyd Garrison in the chair, and who was surrounded, as is usual at these anti-slavery gatherings, by white men, black men, and strong-minded women. After the customary preliminary business had been disposed of, the chairman submitted a number of resolutions, which were received with great favor by his followers. We make room for two. The first, it will be seen, affirms that anti-slavery is more important than the Union:

"*Resolved*, That we shall allow nothing to stand between the slave and his emancipation—neither parchment nor compact, neither constitution nor Union, neither political party nor religious sect; but we shall press through them all, or over them all—diverted by no side issue, intimidated by no menace, appalled by no danger—till we break his yoke, and place him redeemed and disenthralled upon the world-wide platform of a common humanity."

The next, which we give below, declares that abolitionists take pride in being called infidels and traitors:

"*Resolved*, That if to make human liberty paramount to all other considerations be fanaticism, then we glory in being fanatics; that if to be in deadly antagonism to a pro-slavery religion be infidelity, then are we infidels; and if to declare that a slaveholding Union ought to be dashed in pieces be treason, then we are proud of the title of traitors; for 'the head and front of our OFFENDING hath this EXTENT—NO MORE.'"

More resolutions were offered, which elicited more applause, when Rev. Mr. Higginson took the stand, and manifested the most insane desire to split the Union into innumerable pieces. Mr. Parker Pillsbury followed. He denounced such churches and religious societies as failed to sympathize with abolitionism in the most hearty manner. Harangues were made by Lucy Stone and a negro named Purvis, and the exercises for the day closed with a speech from Wendell Phillips. We can offer no stronger illustration of the wild, insane, and traitorous objects of the abolition-black-republican party than by giving the conclusion of this infamous speech, as we find it reported in the New York Express:

"He continued to advocate the overthrow of the federal government and the dissolution of the Union. There was more terror in Massachusetts of a constable and a writ than there was in South Carolina of Sharpe's rifles. He would thank God if the South would defy Massachusetts to the sword and musket, [applause;] for the next time Lexington and Bunker Hill should speak they would be heard. But the South knew better; she hid herself behind the law, and the North knowing that the decision of the Supreme Court was final, they obeyed it. But the South said: 'If I like your decision I will obey it; if not I won't;' and so the North had her hands tied while the South was free to do as she pleased. It is not with cannon the war begins; no, it is in the hearts of the soldiers. The South has several ideas, but they are all merged in the one word 'slavery.' He didn't care what a man's creed was, or whether he was insane enough to believe in the manliness of James Buchanan, if, aside from all other issues, he would aid the speaker in abolishing slavery. Goethe says: 'If you plant an oak in a flower-pot, one of two things must happen—either the oak will die, or the flower-pot will break.' Now he went in for the oak, and abandoned the flower-pot, the constitution. [Laughter and applause.] When Brougham stood before the House of Lords, and was asked how far he would go in defence of the Queen, he said he knew no one but her, and if the throne and nobles sunk, he cared not; and he went in and won, for he was bound to do so. So would he recommend the abolitionist to say 'he knew no one but the slave, and if the constitution and Senate go to the bottom, where they belonged, so much the better.' [Great applause.] He continued in a strong speech against the federal government, eulogizing Margaret Gardner, who murdered her child rather than let him go into the hands of her pursuers. The Dred Scott decision was more dreadful to him than Sharpe's rifles, and he must raise New York, Massachusetts, and Wisconsin to the level of being traitors. There is only one word that the republican people know, and dare not utter, namely, that this is a resolution, but such must be avowed; and that there is no constitutional allegiance left. New York must be educated to trample the law under foot; Massachusetts men to be made to say that no slave law will be allowed there, or obeyed; and he wanted to make the soil of Massachusetts so hot that a slaveholder would sooner go down to his birthplace, hell, than come into Massachusetts."

HON. M. L. BONHAM.

The Charleston Courier, in noticing the election of Gen. Milledge L. Bonham to Congress from the Edgefield district, to supply the vacancy caused by the death of the lamented Brooks, says he is a gentleman of high character and great intelligence, and a lawyer of eminence. He graduated in the South Carolina College in the year 1834, carrying off the second honor of his class, the first honor having been awarded to Mr. Sullivan, his competitor in the congressional canvass.

The vote stood:

Bonham	3,552
Sullivan	2,093
Bonham's majority	1,459

We regret to state that a telegraphic despatch has been received by the agents of the associated press announcing the death of Hon. Stephen Adams, late United States senator from Mississippi. Mr. Adams had recently removed to Memphis, Tennessee, with the view of practising law in that cit .

THE NEW YORK TRIBUNE.

The New York Tribune, in that spirit of lusty enterprise and indiscriminate combativeness which distinguishes its extraordinary course, has thought proper to pay us a passing notice. We could have dispensed with the honor; we would, most willingly, have limited our intercourse to those mere personal civilities and social courtesies so pleasantly begun with its truly distinguished editor only a week ago. We had only known Mr. Greeley through the columns of the Tribune. We had only seen him in those unsightly daguerreotypes which his opponents or his enemies had from time to time made of him. This knowledge, whether derived from types and figures, current history, or uncertain and erring rumor, we must confess that our opinion of him, in everything except his ability and enterprise, was not of the most favorable character. But let us just as candidly declare that the brief intercourse with him of a single hour served very materially to modify our opinions and to soften our prejudices. Whether this arose from the peculiar characteristics and force of his own mind, the enthusiasm of his nature—which imparts a warmth and geniality to all that he says, and is one great element of success in all that he does—or whether to the ardency of our own temperament and confiding impressibility, we will not now determine. But the main fact was, as already stated, that we left New York with a better opinion of the editor of the Tribune, as a man, than what we had heretofore entertained.

We shall not now give utterance to the full impressions made upon us by that agreeable interview. But he did make an impression upon us—a decided impression—a pleasant, favorable impression—and we at the same time did make an analysis in our own mind, as far as we could, of the man and the editor. It struck us very quickly that he is not exactly a *unity*, but is, in truth, a sort of moral *duality*. Indeed, many affirm that there is still a third element, or character—the philosopher—which might really constitute him a veritable *trinity*. And, doubtless, there is many a luckless editor who would swear that Horace is a monstrous *plurality*, combining in himself the ability and force of a whole regiment. But we had no time to verify these speculations further than we have said, that Horace the *man*, and Greeley the *editor*, differ very materially. But we are not now writing history, nor biography, nor philosophy, but are led to these remarks on reading a short article of the Tribune of Monday last. We will quote but a single sentence. The Tribune says:

"*The Union*, the central organ of the *pro-slavery democracy*, is *alarmed* at the aspect of things in Missouri."

Hold, friend Greeley! There are two capital mistakes in this one short sentence of only two lines.

1. We are not the central organ of the *pro-slavery democracy*. All that we claim to be, and all that we desire to be, as far as our party may choose to consider us, is simply one amongst the many organs of the *united national democracy*, whether that democracy reside in the North or in the South—whether they own negroes or whether they own them not. We are the advocate and supporter of every right defined and guarantied by the constitution, and opposed to every effort which has been, or may be made, to disparage those rights or lessen the obligations which every American citizen owes to that great national compact. We are as zealously and as truly the friend of the democracy of the *North*, who have their rights secured and their duties defined by that great charter, as we are of the democracy of the *South*, who have their peculiar rights guarantied, and their duties, also, as clearly prescribed.

2. We are not "alarmed at the aspect of affairs in Missouri." Why should we be? Does the Tribune suppose that because black republicanism has obtained a mere local and temporary triumph in the city of St. Louis, therefore the State of Missouri is in favor of emancipation? St. Louis is not the State! If that is the logic of the Tribune, it will not do; but let us try the logic of facts.

When the question of emancipation was before the legislature at its last session, and after a most elaborate speech in its favor by one of its ablest champions, and not one word from the opposite side in reply, there were but two counties out of one hundred and seven, of which the State is composed, that voted to sustain that doctrine. Our recollection is that there were only FOURTEEN, out of some three hundred members, who recorded their names in favor of emancipation. Is there anything in this to alarm us? We think not. But we beg to say to our contemporary that we are rather more familiar with the condition of politics and parties in Missouri than he is likely to be. We are fresh from their contests, and have learned their history by mingling in the strife. The Tribune has gathered its information from sources not only indifferent to the truth, but whose constant effort it was to misrepresent, to mislead, and deceive. Let us assure it further, that the election of Mr. Wimer, if properly understood, is but a small cause for rejoicing. He was elected, not by a majority, but by a plurality vote; for although he beat the democratic candidate by some twelve or fifteen hundred, yet the aggregate vote for the democratic and know-nothing candidates showed a very large majority over the republican. We cannot perceive in this anything to inspire such extravagant joy in the republicans, or any peculiar cause of fear and alarm to the constitution-loving, law-abiding, loyal and peaceful citizens of that State. Is our love of peace, order, and quietude to be construed into a feeling of fear? Let madness and fanaticism exert their utmost efforts against the constitution, and the settled institutions that are secured and protected by it; let folly and wickedness plot against the Union and the peace of the country, yet we assure our enthusiastic contemporary that we are neither afraid nor alarmed.

HON. WILLIAM BARKSDALE.

The following resolution was unanimously adopted at a democratic meeting held in Lowndes county, Mississippi, on the 20th ultimo:

"*Resolved*, That we have every confidence in our able and faithful representative in Congress, the Hon. Wm. Barksdale; that he has proved himself in every way worthy of our trust, and that the democracy of Lowndes present his name to the district convention as their choice for re-election to Congress from this district in October next, and that we concur in the suggestion that the district convention meet on the 1st Monday in July at Louisville."

GENERAL QUITMAN.

At a democratic meeting held in Natchez, on the 4th inst., the following resolution was adopted:

"*Resolved*, That as it seems to be the general desire of this, the fifth congressional district, that General John A. Quitman should be renominated for Congress, we suggest to the several counties that he be nominated by acclamation, thereby avoiding the inconvenience of holding a district convention."

DUTIES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND LABORS OF THE OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES.

Having recently seen a bill reported during the last Congress by Mr. Adams, a senator from Mississippi, for reorganizing the Attorney General's Office and changing it into a law department, we have been led to make some examination into its present duties, responsibilities, and labors. The office was created by the judiciary act of 1789, and specific duties devolved upon it, relating to arguing causes in the Supreme Court and giving legal opinions when required by the President or requested by the head of a department. These were increased by the act of 1830 creating the office of Solicitor of the Treasury, for which he was made the counsellor and legal adviser. His duties were largely augmented by the law of 1841, requiring him to examine and certify upon the validity of the title to lands purchased by the government for public purposes. They were further increased by an executive order of 1855, making him the organ of the departments in giving instructions for the institution and defence of suits where the United States are interested. When required by the President or a statute, he takes charge of other legal matters, as specially directed, as in the enlistment suits and California land cases. All these duties are performed, under high responsibilities, with only the assistance of clerks receiving the ordinary salaries, without the aid of a single bureau officer. This simple statement must be sufficient to satisfy all that a law department should be created, and the Attorney General provided with those aids common to all departments. The public convenience requires that there should be one central head for the management of all the legal business of the government. This can best be done by uniting the Solicitor's office to the Attorney General's, thus forming a department, and clothing it with all the powers necessary to supervise and control, through the district attorneys, the civil and criminal law business arising under the laws of the federal government.

On a recent occasion a gentleman familiar with the affairs of the government and the operations of the various departments and offices made the following remarks, which we are permitted to copy:

"Ours is a complex system of government, consisting of national, State, county, and town laws, enacted by separate authorities, and construed and executed by different jurisdictions. These various laws constitute a mass of political machinery more complicated than exists elsewhere in the civilized world. Wheel revolves within wheel, from that which encircles the Union to that of the smallest school district. The harmonious working of this immense body of legal machinery mainly depends upon each portion being applied exclusively to its proper functions. When diverted from its legitimate and appropriate uses, more or less of the whole becomes deranged, often producing injurious, if not fatal, consequences. The judiciary, in expounding and applying the laws, constitute the great regulating power, which confines each portion to its proper functions, quickening when necessary, and restraining when proper, and guiding the whole for the common good. The judiciary consists of magistrates of diversified jurisdictions, from those setting upon the supreme bench at the Capitol to those who adjudicate upon the minor differences as village justices, each having assigned him duties adapted to his jurisdiction. In each of these the parties may appear and be represented by counsel whose occupation is studying and expounding the laws and asserting and protecting the rights of their clients. Judicial tribunals settle the contested rights of parties with the aid of all the light which counsel can shed upon them.

"When aided by the industry, learning, and intelligence of counsel, the duties of the judge are properly esteemed most laborious and arduous, and his position one of the highest responsibility. Permit me to describe some of the duties now devolved upon the Attorney General. In addition to those of a member of the cabinet, others relating to judicial appointments and the investigation of applications for pardons are now committed to him. As counsel and advocate he has charge of the entire litigation in the Supreme Court where the government is concerned, including the California and other land cases.

"But his greatest labors are in his quasi-judicial capacity, in the performance of which he is seldom aided by the labors of counsel, and never, except upon one side. He is required by law to examine the title to every purchase of real estate made by the government, whether for sites for light-houses, custom-houses, post offices, marine hospitals, or navy-yards, forts, or other public purpose. No money can be expended upon either until he certifies the title to be valid. A still greater subject of judicial labor is found in the calls by the President and heads of department for opinions upon questions of law, to aid them in the discharge of their official duties. His opinions give direction to the operations of the national government, and often influence those of the States. In forming them he, from necessity, acts from his own examinations, without the advantage which the courts derive from forensic discussions. This branch of his duties is rapidly increasing. During the first half century of our government few of this class of opinions were given, and none upon titles; these are published in three common-sized volumes. Those given by the present incumbent, within the last four years, will fill the same number of volumes. Those relating to titles, during the same time, would fill another. These duties have occasioned a labor which few men could endure, and have been performed, as, from the character of those who have held the office, I feel authorized to say, with a single eye to truth and justice, and with a watchful solicitude to secure the citizen his rights and to keep the operations of the government within their legitimate sphere, thus securing the harmonious working of that portion of our complicated government machinery which is committed to the executive branch of the national government. The opinions given will in all time be quoted by the bar and respected by the bench as reliable expositions of our constitution and laws, and our relative rights and duties as a member of the family of nations."

THE COAST SURVEY.

This valuable work calls forth the following judicious and richly-merited notice from the Charleston Mercury:

"We copy from the recently-received volume, embracing the details of this great work for 1855, a portion which especially relates to the survey of our own coast. This work is undoubtedly the greatest of its kind ever undertaken by any government. Originally devised by Jefferson, it has been steadily pursued for a period of half a century; and the researches to which it has led imbody an amount of scientific as well as practical information that could not otherwise have been obtained. Each succeeding volume gives an enlarged idea of the grandeur of the undertaking, and of the untiring labor and great ability with which its leading idea has been steadily carried forward. One of the most interesting portions of the massive volume from which we make our extracts is its delicately-executed maps and charts of coasts and harbors. One of these contains three profiles of the bottom of Maffit channel, drawn from surveys, made in three different tiers, by the distinguished officer whose name it bears, and these profiles form a history to the eye of the working of this channel. This is one among the thousand specimens of the labor and science exhausted by the officers employed in this great work in order to render it perfect."

ARRIVAL OF WALKER'S MEN.—The New Orleans Delta of the 7th inst. says:

"The tow-boat Persian, Capt. Lambert, arrived last evening from the Passes, having on board 189 men from Lockridge's command in Nicaragua, who were brought to Pass l'Outre by the British war-steamer Tartar, Captain Dunlap, fourteen days from Aspinwall. The original number taken on board at Greytown was 193, three of whom died before leaving Aspinwall, viz: David Conners, Jones, and Holmes, and one died yesterday on the tow-boat while coming up the river. His name was Robert Malone; his body was brought to the city. Captain Dunlap, of the Tartar, accompanied by several of his officers, also came up to the city on the Persian.

"We have seen and conversed with quite a number of those who returned on the Tartar, and they all express their heartfelt gratitude to Capt. Dunlap, his officers and crew, for their kindness and untiring attentions to them in their distressed condition."

DEPARTMENT NEWS.

STATE DEPARTMENT.

Interesting Letter from Hayti.—Extract from a letter from a correspondent at Cape Haytien, Hayti, dated April 15, 1857:

"The number of American vessels at this port during the past quarter has been unusually small, but the imports and exports from and to the United States compare favorably with those of preceding quarters. The Haytien currency remains firm at the rate of sixteen Haytien dollars to one Spanish or American dollar.

"Trade between this port and the United States is in a prosperous state. A large quantity of American provisions are imported here yearly, and upon these importations the people are entirely dependent for their daily food. Agriculture here is now almost entirely neglected, and a soil which has probably not its equal in the world for richness and fertility is allowed to run entirely to waste. During the four years which I have been a resident of the country the provisions raised here have more than tripled their value.

"The political state of the country is very quiet. On the demand of the consuls general of France and England at Port au Prince, the Emperor has granted a truce to the inhabitants of the eastern or Dominican part of the island, to commence from the 14th of February, 1857, and to extend until the same date in the year 1859. In consequence orders were immediately given to cease all hostilities on the line occupied by the military posts and garrisons of this government. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, in his despatch of the 19th March, has, besides, announced that the Emperor permits to the inhabitants of the eastern part to travel freely, and to transact all kinds of business, either civil or commercial, within the extent of the empire. If this truce is accepted, a great benefit will result from it to the commerce of this port, as a large trade may at once be opened with the eastern part, the frontiers of which are only about fifty miles distant from this city.

"No change has occurred during the past quarter in any of the commercial regulations or revenue laws of the country."

TREASURY DEPARTMENT.

The Delaware Trust Land Sales.—As the time for the sale of these lands is rapidly approaching, the following letter from the Acting Secretary of the Treasury to the Secretary of the Interior will be read with interest:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, May 11, 1857.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt today of your letter of the 9th instant, enclosing that of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs of the 8th instant.

From the requirements of the public service at the West, the assistant treasurer at St. Louis has recently been supplied with a considerable sum in transfer drafts on New York, of which upwards of $150,000 were undisposed of by his last returns. About half this sum are for $20,000 and $10,000 each; the balance being in drafts of $5,000 each. These drafts are negotiated to parties desiring funds in New York at the current premium, which of late has not been less in any case than ½ per cent. The Treasurer objects to the issue of transfer drafts for less sums than $1,000, from the great additional delay and labor it imposes on all the offices through which they must pass.

As any sum less than $1,000 in gold may be very readily transported on the person, there seems to be no very strong reason in favor of transfer drafts less than $1,000. I have therefore directed the Treasurer to send to the assistant treasurer at St. Louis fifty transfer drafts, of $1,000 each, which, with those of larger sums now on hand, will be sufficient to meet all probable demands. It will, of course, be impossible for the assistant treasurer at St. Louis to discriminate in favor of the land speculator, and against the merchant desiring to pay his debts—the same premium must be paid by all at the same time.

At this place the Treasurer will receive any sum which may be offered, and give his check on the assistant treasurer at New York for the amount, as he has been accustomed to do. These checks may be remitted to Kansas, and, as well as transfer drafts, may be received by the agent of your department as cash upon your instructions to that effect. If you will be pleased to direct your agent to send both drafts and checks so received directly to you for collection, instead of depositing them with the assistant treasurer of St. Louis, as was before done, it will save correspondence, counter entries, &c., hereafter. Allow me to suggest that your agent should be instructed to deposite only the cash with the asistant treasurer—the transfer drafts and checks of the treasurer on New York will be realized there only.

Last year a small amount of transfer drafts, payable at St. Louis, were issued to be exchanged for money deposited at New York. The present state of the public money at those two points does not admit of that arrangement at present. Parties in New York, Philadelphia, or any other point on the Atlantic, may, if they please, deposite money here with the Treasurer, whose checks may be made available by your instructions; which is the best arrangement for their convenience the public service now admits. Very respectfully, &c.,

P. CLAYTON,
Acting Secretary of Treasury.

Hon. J. THOMPSON, Secretary of Interior.

INTERIOR DEPARTMENT.

Offices of the Surveyors General.—As an item of interest, it may be well to state that there are in the United States twelve surveyors general, whose offices are situated at the following points, viz:

St. Paul, Minnesota Territory; St. Louis, Missouri; Donaldsonville, Louisiana; Little Rock, Arkansas; Dubuque, Iowa; St. Augustine, Florida; Salem, Oregon Territory; San Francisco, California; Santa Fe, New Mexico; Olympia, Washington Territory; Lecompton, Kansas Territory; Salt Lake City, Utah Territory.

Reduction of the Force Employed in the Agricultural Bureau of the Patent Office.—In consequence of the completion of the distribution for the present season of seeds by the Agricultural Bureau of the Patent Office, seven men and twenty young boys employed upon this branch of the business have been dismissed.

Fraudulent Pension Claims.—The following telegraphic despatch appeared in the papers of yesterday morning:

"LANCASTER, May 12.—D. B. Vondersmith, who was arrested some three years since, charged with frauds on the Pension Bureau, but absconded, was arrested here today, and sent to Philadelphia in custody of Marshal Jenkins."

On application, the Commissioner of Pensions informed us that about three years ago it was discovered that Judge Vondersmith and a prominent lawyer named Ford, both of Lancaster city, Pa., had succeeded in obtaining between $60,000 and $70,000 by forging pension claims. The parties were arrested, but gave bail for their appearance at court to answer to the charge, and immediately afterwards ran off to Europe, where, it is understood, Ford died. Vondersmith recently came back to Lancaster, and his prompt rearrest is highly creditable to the officers of the government having official cognizance of his return.

Pension Agents Appointed.—Charles F. Warner has been appointed pension agent at Burlington, Vermont, in place of C. F. Staniford, resigned.

B. F. Blodget has been appointed pension agent at Bradford, Vermont, whither the agency at Montpelier has been removed.

We take the following from the "*Courrier des Etats Unis*" of Monday:

"The Trieste Gazette records a fact which would (if true) effect a complete revolution in the commerce of silk. We publish it without vouching for its truth. A chemist of Lodi, Luigi Cavazalli, has obtained several continuous threads of silk from the leaves of the mulberry without the intervention of silk worms. A similar discovery was spoken of in France more than a year ago."

The New Orleans *L'Union* (French) of the 6th inst. says:

"It is stated that a Spanish general has recently been forced to resign a military position which he filled in the island of Cuba in consequence of his participation in the landing of African slaves in the district of which he was commandant. He finds in his misfortune ample consolation in the sum of $200,000, which falls to his share in the transaction."

The New Orleans Delta of the 7th inst. states that the schooner Lewis McLane, which cleared at the custom-house a few days since, returned to that city on the 6th, having been intercepted by the United States cutter Lewis Cass, Brushard, at the head of the Passes. The seizure was made at the instance of the collector of the port, on suspicion that she was fitted out for the purpose of engaging in the slave trade. The cargo with which she cleared consisted of 100 water cask, 8,500 staves, 2,500 feet lumber, 200 barrels of whiskey, a quantity of hardware, earthenware, dry goods, medicines, provisions, &c.

THE BRITISH TITLE IN THE TERRITORIES OF CENTRAL AMERICA.

WASHINGTON, May 12, 1857.

To the Editor of the Union:

SIR: I have for some time found an absorbing study in the political history of the American isthmus, particularly that part of it relating to the territorial aggressions of Great Britain in Central America, on which subject I have already, with permission, addressed several public letters to the press. At this particular juncture, when the Central-American matter is reported to be still *in statu quo*, or to have been further complicated by the rejection of the treaty, I have thought that the second thought of the people on the subject might be appropriately engaged by a review of the question, made up from historical sources, to which access hitherto has not been common. I have therefore gathered some notes on the subject, and place them at your disposal, as composing a history, complete in all respects, and, I venture to say, not a little striking in its information, of the history of the British title in the territories of Central America.

The facts of the case deserve a fair summing up, and I shall be guilty of no appeal to the popular temper on the subject, except such as may be directly suggested and fully warranted by the text of history.

The asserted claims of Great Britain in the territories of Central America may be stated as the Mosquito protectorate, the Belize establishment, (British Honduras,) and the Bay Islands colony.

The Mosquito title, in its first source, is altogether derived from a historical assumption—namely, that the native Indians, of whom so little is known that their proper name even has become lost to history, never lost their independence by conquest, but have continued from the remotest times a free and independent nation, and capable of acting politically as such. Nicaragua has repeatedly reclaimed the disputed territory as her domain, by reason of her succession to the rights of Spain. On the other hand, England has maintained, evidently for her own purposes, the authority of the Indian King by virtue of a transfer of his territories into her protection in the year 1687. The historical evidence for the independence of Mosquitia, on the strength of which this protectorate is asserted, is altogether negative—being mainly adduced from the singular fact that no ruins of any fortifications or churches have been found in proof of the country having ever been subjugated to the dominion of Spain and held in possession by her.

In fact, however—admitting, as we may, the significance of the evidence referred to—England, in her assumed protectorate, can derive no benefit from these historical doubts. In the treaty of Paris, drawn up in 1783, England had not made any profession of a protectorate in Central America; and by her own silence the claim of Spain was virtually admitted.

But, in 1841, England gave proof of her determination to secure the country as a dependency on the British empire. In that year San Juan was threatened by a man-of-war; while the country all along the coast was visited by Colonel Macdonald, the British superintendent of Belize, who, under the disguise of a protectorate, established an absolute control, by deception and duress, over the simple savages. Such an impostured administration England continued to maintain in Mosquitia, the crowning act of which was the seizure of the port of San Juan in 1848. Just six days after the celebration of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, when it became certain that California would fall into the hands of the United States, and when an interoceanic transit had become a paramount object of interest, an attack was made upon San Juan by the British men-of-war, the Alarm and Vixen, and the port seized, and under the name of Greytown, and with an English municipal organization, added to the Mosquito dominions. The outrage was committed under the pretext that the port belonged to the Mosquito territory, which extended, as it was claimed, to the lagoon south of the town. Under such a shallow pretext, England secured her vile acquisition, although she herself had previously recognised San Juan as Nicaraguan territory, and it had been, as history, tradition, and the monuments of the country attested, a principal port of entry under the dominion of Spain.

It is scarcely necessary to allude to the utter destitution of the Mosquito protectorate of right or title as a territorial claim. Apart from any quit-claim which England may have implied or made in the treaty of Paris and that of 1786 with Spain, it is evident that her assumed protectorate could, in the reason of things, only have extended to the mere persons of miserable and obscure savages, incapable of the territorial rights of civilized nations, and could never have rightfully implied the exercise of political sovereignty, which in time past she has virtually claimed in Mosquitia.

As to the Belize establishment, the British usurpation of territorial sovereignty there has been equally characteristic of the policy of England to turn every privilege to advantage by claiming more than is conceded, and to make the most specious pretexts, however weak in invention. It was by virtue of treaties with Spain that the English obtained the right to cut mahogany and dye woods at the Belize; but all domain or sovereignty was positively excluded. This limited and peculiar establishment constitutes really everything to which England can justly pretend in Central America or Mexico, and our own government has been willing to recognise it as such. We should insert the explanation that Belize is not properly a part of Central America, but of Mexico, having formerly belonged, probably, to the viceroyalty of Yucatan; and that the questions connected with it are scarcely subjects for any practical interference on the part of our government while there is such a complication of parties to the issue of territorial sovereignty, and Guatemala chooses to submit to encroachments on her territory. It is very evident, however, that, in establishing the dominion of so-called "British Honduras," the territorial sovereignty was usurped in open disregard of the terms of the original treaty concessions; and that, not satisfied with the false pretence of sovereignty in the premises, Great Britain has perpetrated the bolder crime of adding to her political estate, at the expense of the neighboring powers. The very name itself of British Honduras is said to have been usurped to give color to a claim to certain islands in the bay which had been notoriously recognised as Hondurian territory.

The chief and most distinct issue made by our government in the Central American imbroglio had been in relation to Ruatan and the "Bay Islands," which we refer to as having been wrested from Honduras. The history of the foundation of the so-called "Bay Islands colony" is the brief one of the open violation of law, without circuity or pretext. But the early accounts of these islands and their whole history are of sufficient interest to refer to for some time back, as related to what was the most important issue in past negotiations between the governments of the United States and Great Britain, and especially as throwing light upon the course of aggression and rapacity that England has pursued for centuries in this quarter of the western hemisphere.

What are spoken of as the "Bay Islands" comprise a number of beautiful islands dotting the Bay of Honduras. Many of them grow valuable woods, and one affords the best harbor on that part of the coast. The natives of these islands, who were very peaceable and docile, were captured in large numbers by the early navigators, and sold as slaves in Spain; and this, with the ravages of the pirates, almost completed the work of depopulation. In a short time only three of the islands were occupied by the remnants of the native population, viz: Ruatan, Utila, and Guanaja. The most remarkable and important of these islands is Ruatan, which alone remained inhabited down to the present century, and on which the English, for more than two centuries, have striven to keep a foothold.

In the year 1642 Ruatan and Guanaja were taken possession of by a party of English freebooters, who were not resisted by the Indians. The seizure of so important a position as these islands was calculated to excite the fears of the Spanish settlers in Central America. The English, from their facility of position, might at any time easily invade the neighboring ports, or might cut off their communication with Spain. The governor of Havana