resolutions relating to the emancipation and colonization of Negroes.

PRIVILEGES FOR SAILORS AND MARINES.

The House Post-Office Committee will report a bill giving the sailors and marines the same privileges as the soldiers enjoy in sending free all letters through the mails.

THE MILITARY APPOINTMENTS.

The Senate Military Committee will take up, at their meeting to-morrow, the 1,400 military appointments before them for confirmation. The Committee are disposed to apportion them equally among the States. Some States have four times the number they are entitled to.

GEN. M'CLELLAN ABROAD.

Gen. McClellan drove out for the second time since his illness to-day. He will soon be in the saddle.

SOFT ARMY OFFICERS DISMISSED THE SERVICE.

The names of several young army officers who have expressed the opinion that the South cannot be whipped have recently been stricken from the rolls. We trust that this is only the first step in the right direction.

APPOINTMENT OF A SON OF GEN. PATTERSON.

Two weeks since Gen. McClellan requested of the Secretary of War the appointment of Frank Patterson, son of Gen. Patterson, as Brigadier-General. Yesterday an order for his appointment was sent by the President to the War Department.

THE CASE OF ZACHARY.

Mr. Zachary of New-Orleans, taken off the British schooner Victoria by Com. Ridgeley in the Gulf of Mexico some six weeks ago, and for some time confined in Fort Lafayette, was released from that place of imprisonment about a fortnight ago, and has since been at large in New-York. The Government are aware that he has been buying gunny bags for shipment to Matamoras, with a view to the occupation of that place by a British force, and the establishment of an illicit trade in cotton and munitions of war between the Confederates and the English.

PROPOSED TELEGRAPH TAX.

Among the schemes for filling the Treasury is one imposing a tax upon telegraphic messages, by which sanguine journals and legislators promise themselves an annual revenue of four or five millions. The truth is that the total receipts in a year at all the telegraph offices in the United States are not more than two millions.

[Special to the Associated Press.]

WASHINGTON, Tuesday, Jan. 7, 1862.

THE TREASON IN WASHINGTON.

It is known that several female prisoners are searched and cared for in the northern part of the city by a detachment of the Sturgis Rifles, under Lieut. Shelton. On several occasions recently, events have transpired showing a plot to clandestinely effect their escape, but the vigilance of the guard has as often frustrated it.

ARRIVAL OF GEN. SHIELDS.

Brig.-Gen. Shields has reached Washington.

PENNSYLVANIA FIRST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT.

The report of the Committee on Elections is in favor of John M. Butler, against Wm. E. Lehman, who occupies the seat in the House from the 1st District of Pennsylvania. The minority of the Committee, Messrs. Worcester and Brown, have come to a directly opposite conclusion. The subject will be taken up for consideration next week.

THE FINANCIAL SCHEME.

The Committee of Ways and Means has not yet formally considered the financial scheme of the Secretary of the Treasury, or any other.

THE WORLD'S FAIR.

As the Navy Department has no vessel to detail for carrying to London, as in 1851, the contributions which the Americans may desire to exhibit at the World's Fair, the President recommends that authority be given to charter a suitable vessel for that purpose.

THE EXTRA SESSION MILEAGE.

The appropriation for compensation and mileage of members of the House is under the control of the Treasurer of the United States as disbursing agent, and he has refused payment of the claim for extra mileage whenever presented, nor has mileage for the extra session been paid to any Senators by the Treasury Department before the recent decision of the Secretary, as has been erroneously stated.

IMPORTANT CAPTURE.

Last night Col. Howell of the 85th Pennsylvania regiment, proceeded about twenty miles from Washington to a house which was known to be occupied by a Capt. Gwin, who was captured. The latter was an officer of the rebel army, and had not long before crossed from Virginia into Maryland, where his family resided. There were found in his possession numerous letters directed to parties both in the North and South, and also bundles of clothing, which doubtless he intended to transfer across the Potomac into Virginia. The expedition returned to Good Hope this morning. They brought with them the prisoner, the property, and several loads of forage.

THE PERUVIAN MINISTER.

It appears that Manuel Nicholas Corpancho, who recently arrived here, is not a Peruvian Minister to the United States Government, but to Mexico, and will soon leave for that country.

RECONNOISSANCE DOWN THE MISSISSIPPI.

CAIRO, Ill., Tuesday, Jan. 7, 1862.

Flag-Officer Foote, with the gunboats Essex, Lexington, and Tyler, made a reconnoissance down the Mississippi this morning. He went within 200 yards of the range of the rebel batteries. On his return, he was fired at by the rebel gunboat Mohawk, to which he replied; but the shots all fell short. The Flag-Officer is highly satisfied with the reconnoissance, and has examined all points on the river, as near as two miles to Columbus.

A dispatch from Cape Girardeau, to-day, says that a detachment of the 7th Illinois Cavalry, while scouting, had captured Major Williams, of Jeff. Thompson's band. The surveyor of the port of Metropolis seized a large quantity of gold lace, morphine, and other costly drugs, intended for the rebels. The goods were from Cincinnati.

FROM MISSOURI.

ST. LOUIS, Tuesday, Jan. 7, 1862.

In consequence of disproportionate assessments having been made on rebels in this city under Order No. 24, Gen. Halleck has appointed a new Board of Assessors to revise the old list and make such changes as they deem proper. All other proceedings will be in accordance with the original order and the Board are enjoined to assess no individual unjustly, as there will be no further appeal from their decision.

There is no doubt that Wm. A. Hall is elected to Congress from the Third, and Thos. L. Price from the Fifth District.

SEDALIA, Mo., Tuesday, Jan. 7, 1862.

An express messenger from Col. Nugent's regiment, stationed at West Point, Bates County, arrived here yesterday evening, on his way to St. Louis, with important dispatches to Gov. Gamble. He left Bates County on Friday, and reports that Col. Jennison had burned Austin, in Cass County, instead of Rose Hill.

Col. Jennison, after leaving Austin, went northeast.

The Union men in Johnson County are so much exasperated at the outrages of the rebels that nothing but Union troops will save Lexington and Warrensburg from being burned.

The movements of Col. Jennison are kept secret, yet enough is known to warrant the opinion that certain notorious rebels in Johnson county, and their dupes, will be bagged.

A Government train of about twenty wagons and seventy-five men, is reported to have been captured about five miles north-east of Georgetown by a party of rebels. Word was conveyed to Colonel Thayer of the 1st Nebraska Regiment, at Georgetown, who promptly dispatched a party in pursuit.

FROM FORTRESS MONROE.

FORTRESS MONROE, Monday, Jan. 6, Via BALTIMORE, Jan. 7, 1862.

The accumulation of letters sent to this place for transmission to prisoners of war and others at the South has become so large that the members of Gen. Wool's staff, who are employed in their examination, cannot attend to a third of those that arrive daily. Orders will soon be issued, probably, to limit in some way the number which are allowed to pass, and in the mean time all persons desirous to communicate with friends in the South are requested to make the letters as few and as brief as possible. There are now several thousand waiting to be examined, and many of these which are too long will be destroyed without being read.

The United States steam-transport Spaulding sails for Hatteras this afternoon. Among the passengers is Charles Henry Foster, United States Marshal for North Carolina.

The sloop-of-war Jamestown arrived last night.

The coast-survey schooner Bibb arrived this morning.

A flag of truce from the flag-ship this afternoon brought from Norfolk Capt. Ralph Hunt and Lieut. Ives, released prisoners of war from Richmond, completing the number to 200.

Capt. Hunt belongs to Company C, 1st Kentucky Regiment, and Lieut. Ives to Company G, 79th New-York Regiment.

The Southern papers received contain no news, except a telegraphic dispatch that the Union troops had been repulsed in South Carolina, and forced to take refuge under the cover of their gunboats, on North Edisto Island.

FROM THE UPPER POTOMAC.

FREDERICK, Md., Tuesday, Jan. 7, 1862.

The latest intelligence received from Hancock last night states that Gen. Jackson had retired, leaving only a battery and an infantry guard in sight.

The result of the shelling is unimportant. One rebel officer was seen to fall from his horse, and is believed to have been killed.

None are reported killed or wounded on our side.

Jackson's force consisted of ten regiments, with a large baggage and supply train, and ten days' cooked rations.

It is not known where he went, but it is surmised that he intends to attack Col. Kelly's command.

Gen. Banks's third brigade left here at 5 o'clock yesterday morning, and arrived at Hagerstown, which is 26 miles, at 5 o'clock yesterday evening. No stragglers were left along the route. This much was performed through three to four inches of snow. The brigade will probably reach Hancock at noon to-day.

Gen. Lander has been assigned to the command of Col. Kelly's Division, and Gen. Williams takes command at Hancock.

The latest from Hancock reports all quiet.

The extravagant reports of our being cut up are all false.

The Connecticut 5th returned last Thursday from Hancock, and marched again with the 3d brigade, to which they are attached, yesterday morning. They have not been attacked, as stated, nor have they been in a position to be attacked since they left Hancock yesterday week.

CAPTURE OF REBELS IN CALIFORNIA.

[From The San Francisco Alta, Dec. 11.]

As it is not at all unlikely that Alcatraz Island may speedily become the "Fort Lafayette" of the Pacific Coast, it may not prove uninteresting to give a list of the men who will probably be among the first involuntary boarders of that institution. They are expected on the next steamer.

The official account of the arrest is as follows:

CAMP WRIGHT, OAK GROVE, SAN DIEGO COUNTY, LOWER CALIFORNIA, Nov. 30, 1861.

COLONEL: I take advantage of the departure of Senor Sepulva Ramon, Carillo's brother-in-law, to inform you of the arrest of the Showalter party. Showalter with them. It consists of sixteen men, each armed with rifles and a pair of revolvers. They gave us a hard chase, but we finally captured them. They parleyed, but finally concluded not to resist, although against the advice of Showalter.

The names of the party are T. A. Wilson, Tennessee; W. Woods, Missouri; Charles Pendroth, Kentucky; Wm. Sands, Tennessee; T. L. Roberts, South Carolina; R. H. Wood, Mississipi; T. W. Woods, Virginia; J. W. Sampson, Kentucky; S. A. Rogers, Tennessee; J. Lawrence, Arkansas; Levi Rogers, Alabama; Henry Crowell, Pennsylvania; Wm. Turner, Georgia; Dan. Showalter, Pennsylvania; A. King, Tennessee.

Retook two of the party on the 27th, near the post, viz.: E. B. Summers and F. V. Chum. They were the advancing party, eighteen in all. I am now examining them, and will send you by express, that will leave here to-night some time, full particulars. They now regret that they did not resist; if they had they would have given us a hard fight. There is no doubt that every one of them is a Secessionist, and are on their way to lend aid and comfort to the enemy. I would like to know as soon as possible what to do with them. They have pack mules, and are well fitted out, and a desperate set men.

I am under great obligations to Francisco Ocampo for my success. It is reported that some eighty men are getting ready, and on the road. I will keep a good watch for them.

Very respectfully, EDWIN A. RIGG, Major 1st Infantry, commanding Camp Wright.

To Col. JAS. H. CARLETON, 1st Infantry C. V., Los Angeles, Cal.

P. S.—They were captured at daylight on the morning of the 25th, at John Winter's ranch, near San José Valley.

EDWIN A. RIGG.

Headquarters District of Southern California, Los Angeles, Cal., Dec. 3, 1861.—A true copy.

BEN. C. CUTLER, First Lieut., 1st Infantry, C. V., Acting Assistant Adjutant-General.

LETTER FROM PORT ROYAL, S. C.

The following is an extract from a letter just received by the Treasurer of the American Missionary Association from a United States Chaplain:

PORT ROYAL, S. C., Dec. 23, 1861.

By the good hand of God upon me, I have had a pleasant passage to this port, and landed my Bibles, testaments, spelling books, and other appliances of education, in safety. They are all placed in charge of Mr. Lee, a member of the Old South Church, in Boston, who is acting very judiciously and efficiently as the Government Agent for the "contrabands." They will be carefully distributed by Mr. Lee, by the Rev. Dr. Stickland, one of the editors of *The Christian Advocate and Journal*, who is now here as the Chaplain of the New-York 48th Regiment; by the Rev. Mr. Harris, recently arrived here from Newark, N. J., and by other chaplains.

Sabbath before last I preached to a large audience in Beaufort, the Saratoga of the South. There was quite a company of "contrabands" present. A good beginning was made. Last Sabbath we had a meeting in the open air at Port Royal. It was well attended, and, I hope, useful.

My first spelling-book, given away last Saturday, December 21, under the sanction of the Government, was to a very intelligent colored man, who had learned to be a good tailor. He had worked in Beaufort and Charleston. *His wife and two little children have been taken from him by the slaveholders.* He is a good Christian brother. The spelling-book is a "Union" one. The receiver's name is Gabriel Hayne! May God bless him.

I give on the facts just as they are:

I. Number of blacks coming under the Gospel at Port Royal, and adjacent parts, 3,600.

II. They are willing to work, if well treated. This is abundantly proved.

III. They are all anxious to learn to read. The children are very docile.

IV. No obstacles exist at Hilton Head, where Capt. Saxton is Quartermaster. Capt. Saxton is a U. S. officer, and adopts a highly patriotic and humane course.

V. There are obstacles at Beaufort.*

VI. Tybee and Otter Islands will soon be good fields.

*It is not known here, at New-York, what the "obstacles" alluded to are precisely; but it *is* known that at some other places, where the "contrabands" resort, serious obstacles exist in the way of instructing the colored refugees, owing to the unwillingness of irreligious and Pro-Slavery officers to have them educated either in letters or religion. It is reported that one of the members of Government said, soon after the inauguration of President Lincoln, it is *prima facie* evidence that every one in office commissioned by Mr. Buchanan is unfit to be retained in office under the new Administration. Notwithstanding so many suspected persons have been sent to Fort Lafayette and Fort Warren, or gone to their "own place" in the Secession States, it is feared there are numbers still in the employment of Government who are hostile to the rights of the colored people, even though they are laboriously employed in the service of the country, if not hostile to the Government itself. We hope there will be a good look-out for such secret allies of Secessionism. T.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISCOVERY.

The year 1861 opened with the most brilliant prospects for geographical discoveries. The scientific men, both of England and America, expected that in its course some unknown parts of the earth would be explored, and several important problems solved. Two expeditions, one from Sweden and the other from the United States, were fitted out to go in quest of the North Pole; five different parties, in as many different directions, were searching for the sources of the Nile; a bold project to traverse China and Thibet westward from the Yellow Sea to the Himalayas seemed near its execution; and Australia was to be explored by two expeditions, following different routes, from the Southern to the Northern coast. But all these schemes have failed, more or less signally; scientific travel has been almost everywhere unfortunate; an evil star seems to have reigned; and the year is to be remembered not for its accomplishments, but for its disappointments.

The Polar expedition under Prof. Torell, equipped on a magnificent scale, chiefly by the Swedish Government, and composed of eminent Swedish and Danish naturalists, and of students from Upsal and other universities, sailed from Tromsoe on May 9, 1861, reached a bay on the north of Spitzbergen, lingered there, and advanced no further. The ships were blocked up by the ice, and an attempt to proceed by sledges soon brought them to an open sea. There was ice enough to repulse the ships, and sea enough to stop the dogs. The experience of Torell demonstrated that, though sledge excursions may be available on the American side of Greenland, the only way to reach the Polar region east of Greenland is by a steamer specially designed for the purpose.

The Polar expedition under Dr. Hayes, which returned to Boston on Oct. 23, after an absence of fifteen months, furnished incidentally some important additions to Arctic geography, and went as far North as 81° 35', a degree exceeded only by Sir Edward Perry in 1827-28. But in its main design—the determination of the question as to an open Polar Sea—it was completely defeated.

The Central Asiatic expedition of Capt. Blakiston was thwarted almost at the start. Instead of penetrating from the East to the headlands of the Indus and the Ganges, retracing the steps of the Abbé Huc, and advancing beyond the holy city of Lamaism, he now left the banks of the Yangtse-Kiang, and did not even reach the western boundary of China Proper. He returned to Shanghae on July 23, 1861, in five months from the time of his departure, having encountered the rebellion raging in all its fury in the province of Se-chuen, and having been forced to retreat both by the distrust of the Chinese officials and by the impossibility of going on through desolated provinces.

From Australia there is more afflicting news. In August, 1860, O'Harra Burke proceeded from Melbourne for the interior, in command of an expedition equipped at great expense, and admirably provided with assistants, camels, horses, and supplies. His intention was to make his way through the island to the Gulf of Carpentaria, on its Northern coast. He reached the Cooper Creek on November 11, but was so beset with difficulties that he established there a depot, and went northward with only three companions, six camels, one horse, and provisions for three months. From that time nothing has been heard of him or his companions. The party at the depot waited for him till April 21, 1861, and were then obliged by want of provisions and the hostility of the natives to retreat. Many of them died, and the survivors endured the greatest sufferings. The most painful apprehensions are entertained concerning the fate of Burke. A steamer has been sent to the Gulf of Carpentaria to watch for him, and another expedition set out by land on July 3, to get traces of him.

The failures of Burke, Blakiston, and Torell, are severe disappointments for one year. But the smaller expeditions have been as unfortunate as the greater. Heine has failed to enter Siberia by a previously traveled route from Pekin; Lejean, the enterprising and erudite French explorer, has been compelled by illness to return from the Nile; Miani's second journey to the Upper White Nile has resulted in nothing; Duveyrier has returned to Tripoli; Livingstone, with all possible advantages, has been able to follow the Rovuma only a few miles, and has added little to his earlier discoveries; and Vogel, Neimans, Roscher, Terrannova, Malzac, Heuglin, and Cuny, have found their death in Africa.

But the year has not been altogether fatal. Capt. Palliser has made known his valuable discoveries and verifications in British North America, Tschudi and Barnicister in South America, Maximowitch in the Amoor region, and one of the Australian expeditions, under John McDouall Stuart, has reached the heart of that inhospitable continent. French officers have crossed the Sahara to the sources of the Senegal and the Gambia; Beurmann has wandered, alone and unaided, through unvisited regions of the Nile; Munziger has continued his researches on the north of Abyssinia; and the delightful narrative of Du Chaillu has added picturesque and interesting features to the African mystery. With these results we may also hope that Stuart will cut his way completely through Australia; that either Capt. Speke may penetrate from the Nyanza Lake to the White Nile, or Dr. Peney may do the reverse; that Capt. Smith may return from Thibet with valuable knowledge, and that the missionaries who have set out from Canton to traverse the interior of China to the Yangtse-kiang may succeed in their adventure.

—Some one has supposed that the transference of the Seat of the Russian Empire from Moscow to the coast of the Baltic may sometime prove to have been the most momentous event in modern history. By that act Russia turned her glance westward; the youngest and proudest embodiment of the principles of oriental despotism, she thereby came into relation and inevitable collision with the freer tendencies of Europe, and, while every other European Government has been obliged to concede something to the encroachments of democratic ideas, she alone has confronted destiny by an energetic, sagacious, and absolute autocracy. But her enterprise in the East is even more significant than in the West. Within the last three years she has gained possession of the vast region in North-Western Asia drained by the Amoor, a river of the first magnitude, larger than the Mississippi or the Nile. This territory though little known, has been in dispute between the Muscovite and Celestial Empires ever since the 17th century. By a treaty concluded in 1858, China ceded all the district north of the Amoor, and by a second treaty concluded at Pekin, Nov. 14, 1860, Russia obtained all the territory south of the Amoor, included between the coast and the river Ussoori. She thus holds so much of the sea-coast as fronts upon the empire of Japan, and her southern boundary is only about 500 miles distant from Pekin. The treaties also secure to her the free navigation of the Soongari and Ussuri Rivers, the largest tributaries of the Amoor from the South, and thus all the products of warm Mantchooria will find their main outlet through Russian commerce. The whole country is as yet undeveloped, but it abounds in mineral and agricultural resources, and is in process of rapid colonization. The Island of Saghalien, off the mouth of the Amoor, has commodious harbors, and extensive coal fields. By availing herself of all the advantages that inhere in these acquisitions, Russia can hardly fail to achieve political and commercial supremacy in the farther East. Meantime, she has pushed her conquests southward in Central Asia to Vernoje and Kopal, which are only one-third as far from the Indus as from the Volga, and her next stride may be across the Himalayas.

—The efforts which have been made for several years to recover the lost records of the intrepid and accomplished Asiatic explorer, Adolph Schlagintweit, have at last been crowned with success. It will be remembered that, with his brothers, Hermann and Robert, he set out in 1854, under the patronage of the East India Society, to explore the mountain system of the Himalayas and the adjacent regions. They were provided with the best instruments, traveled wherever it was possible with a little army of dromedaries and coolies, ascended the peak of Ti Gamin, in Thibet, to a hight of 22,260 feet, a greater elevation than Humboldt attained in South America, and had communicated the most valuable results to the learned societies of Europe before the return of Hermann and Robert, in 1857. Adolph pursued his explorations alone, advanced in a north-westerly direction into central Asia, went beyond Yarkand through a region that has been described by no scientific traveler since Marco Polo, and reached the walls of Kashgar. There he perished in a melée between the native savage tribes, after having triumphed over the greatest difficulties of his perilous journey. The English authorities of India, prompted by the universal interest of savants, have from that time been energetically endeavoring to recover his papers, and to save to science the great amount of knowledge he had accumulated. A communication from Sir R. J. Murchison, in a late number of *The London Times*, announces the gratifying intelligence that his journal has been recovered through the agency of the civil Commissioner in Cashmere, that it contains full records of his discoveries up to the time of his death, and that it will be incorporated in the splendid narrative of their travels which the surviving Brothers Schlagintweit are now publishing.

—While sudden and violent revolutions impend over nations, nature is accomplishing, slowly and silently, far more portentous changes. There are harbors famed for ages as commercial centers, from which the sea is gradually withdrawing its waters. The deltas of great rivers grow by accumulation from year to year, till the rivers themselves forsake them and seek new channels. The Sea of Azof, the outlet of the commerce of the Don, is rapidly becoming a vast and impenetrable marsh. Between two measurements, thirty-two years apart, its depth has diminished eleven feet; and the prediction of Strabo may yet be accomplished, that some time both the sea of Azof and the Black Sea will become a waste tract of intermingled lakes and morasses. The largest river of Central Asia, the Oxus, according to the unanimous testimony of ancient authors, rolled its waters into the Caspian Sea. In modern times it has emptied into the Sea of Aral. But it seems to be about to resume its ancient channel to the Caspian, an event which would revolutionize the conditions of commerce between Europe and Asia. The Oxus would then recover its renown as a great highway of nations. The Euphrates, also, is leaving its ancient bed from a point above Killah, and taking a more westerly course. Year by year the new channel receives a large proportion of its waters; the stream that suffers to the old channel has already ceased to produce the inundations, which, like those of the Nile, can alone fertilize its borders; the country adjacent to the ruins of Babylon begins to wear the aspect of hopeless aridity; and the ancient capital of Semiramis and Nebuchadnezzar will soon make the center of a desert. Nor does the river promise to fertilize a new district, but loses itself in the innumerable lakes and marshes which extend to the Persian Gulf.

—The magnitude of Russia is unprecedented in the history of nations. Her vast proportions can only be shown by a comparative statement. The total area of the United States, the North, the South, and the Territories, is 2,936,166 square miles. The area of France (including Corsica and Savoy) is 207,953 square miles. The area of the British Isles is 120,850 square miles. Thus the territorial extent of the United States is twenty-four times greater than that of the British Isles, and fourteen times greater than that of France. Our whole area could be divided into about 400 States of the size of Massachusetts. It is moderate to say that the territory of our single country is much larger than that which constituted the Roman Empire when it was greatest. But Russia is between two and three times larger than the United States. Her square miles, in Europe and Asia, are 7,864,861. From the continuity of the Empire, except Russian America, it may be regarded as one great whole. There is no more interesting problem that that of the destinies of the American Republic and the Russian Empire, which divide between them so much of the earth's surface and so many of the possibilities of the future, and which, while grounded upon opposite political ideas, rival each other in enterprise, vigor, and rapidity of development.

—During the past year Great Britain has taken possession of the small Island of Ichaboe, off the south east coast of Africa, valuable chiefly for its guano, and has formally annexed it to Cape Colony. The important town of Lagos, on the Guinea coast of Africa, once notorious for its slave-trade, was also ceded on Aug. 7 to the British crown. A British steamer has also visited the recently-discovered Fanning Island, which stands by itself in midocean, south of the Sandwich Islands, and has planted the British flag upon it, in the name of the Queen, and amid salvos of artillery.

THE KINGS COUNTY REPUBLICAN GENERAL COMMITTEE.—The members of the General Committee for 1862, elected at the recent primary meetings, assembled at the old Headquarters, No. 9 Court-street, last night. Mr. Wm. A. Cort was chosen temporary Chairman, and S. Alpheus Smith of the Eleventh, Secretary. A Committee was appointed on the contested memberships, and the Committee adjourned for one month.

THE INTERIOR COMMERCE OF OUR STATE.

The year 1861 has thus far developed a power in the Erie Canal to move a commerce between the Western States and this city never before practically comprehended. We have had *theoretical* estimates of what the Canal could do when completed and pushed to its full capacity of transportation, to be sure, and sufficiently rose-colored at that; but of the actual capacity of the Canal to carry its burdens, and its facilities for the movement of its cargoes, nothing but the practical test can settle the facts which are desirable to know.

Fifty millions of bushels of grain, chiefly Indian corn and wheat (including flour from wheat), have been received at Buffalo from the Western Lakes from the opening of navigation in April last to the first day of November, and an equal amount of the same articles has been received at Troy and Albany—the heads of tide-water on the Hudson River—by the Erie Canal, and a very considerable portion of them have come direct by canal-boats, without breaking bulk, to this city. We do not intend to say that the identical grain which arrived in Buffalo by the lakes has been in all cases shipped *through* to Troy or Albany on the canal, but what portion of it has been diverted from Buffalo to way or side-markets, has been resupplied to the canal by way of the Oswego and other tributary canals, making the receipts at tide-water about the same in amount and tonnage as arrived at Buffalo by the lakes.

It is yet too early to say what actual amount of grain will be transported to the end of the navigable season of the lakes and canals, but reckoning it at a month more, or until the 1st of December—and with an average season it will hold out that—we may put the whole amount of grain (flour from wheat included) at 60,000,000 bushels. That is 20,000,000 bushels more than was transported last year, 1860, the heaviest grain-year for the canals ever before. This is but the transportation of a single article *down* the Canal, not enumerating the enormous quantities of other agricultural products, beside those of the forest and mines, chiefly lumber, iron and coal, and the up freights of merchandise, salt, and other heavy material, which compose more or less of the return cargoes of the boats.

All this tonnage, be it understood, is moved on the *unfinished* canal, with an average draft to the boats of five and half feet of water in its channel, the largest boats taking about 6,500 bushels of wheat or 7,000 bushels of corn only. Another year, we trust, will give seven feet of water in the completed canal, and a draft of six to six and a half feet to the boats, thus enlarging their tonnage to 8,000 bushels of wheat each, with scarcely more of propelling power, and a trifling added cost to their movement. We have no time, nor have we the data at hand, now to go into an accurate estimate of the full capacity of the Canal in its movement of tonnage to tide-water when the enlargement shall be completed; but allowing for even double the tonnage now moved, there is a *reserved* capacity, with some not expensive improvements, which one year may render effective, that will increase the tonnage of our present largest boats fully one-third, at little more expense to the freighter or boat-owner. The chief improvement to which we allude is an extension of the length of the locks from 90, as they now are, to 130 feet, which, in the estimate of competent contractors, can be done for less than half a million of dollars. For a less sum than this, they offer to give security for the performance of the work.

It may be too early just now to suggest a still further expenditure by the State on a work which has already cost a great deal too much, for reasons easy to explain; but in a *paying* work like this, such trifling additional expenditure to accomplish largely increased results would scarce be called bad policy in any private enterprise of importance. We hope to see this subject fully set forth in the reports of the Canal Department to the Legislature the coming Winter.

There are other items of canal management which need thorough reform, and although plausible enough in their present practice over that of the past, show decidedly evil results. We now allude to the contract system of canal repairs, lock-tending, &c., by which great delay is suffered by the boats, and an absolute system of bribery has to be submitted to on the part of boatmen to the contractors and lock-tenders in order to hurry along and make their passages within reasonable time. We admit that the contract system is the best where the chief end of the public good is obtained, and it is evident that a large gain has been made by the State in the contract repair system over the old one of employing a corps of partisan superintendents with their hundreds or thousands of equally partisan subordinates in dawdling over their jobs and wasting the public money. Yet we fear that while the State is "saving at the spigot it may be losing at the bung," as no set of contractors will make a repair so long as the work will hold together during the life of their contract, and in the end the heavy repairs which the State will be obliged to make will counterbalance all it has saved by the cheaper method.

Another item connected with the financial system of the canals should be taken in hand and thoroughly examined by the next Legislature. Our Constitutional Convention of 1846, moved thereto by the super-economico ideas of Michael Hoffman, Controller Flagg, and their associates of that day—well enough, we grant, in the face of the outrageous canal swindles of that period, and its lately previous years—limited the payment of the canal debts to the short time of eighteen years after their contraction. That policy has compelled the people of the State to pay a heavy annual tax ever since to meet the interest and extinguish a portion of the principal, according to the terms of the Constitution, in the absence of a sufficient canal revenue to meet those demands. To pay the *interest*, we admit the policy to be a sound one; but why we, in the face of an increasing revenue, a rapidly growing trade, and an unbounded State credit, the people who have accomplished the great work of enlarging the canals for the benefit of those who are to use them in all future time, should be compelled to put our hands in our pockets and pay for this work, there can be no valid reason. Our enlarged canal is more for the benefit of the farmers and people of the States west of us than for ourselves. They are, in the facility and cheapness of transportation of their products and property to which we thus aid them, made our competitors in the seaboard markets, and should be made to pay for it. This, by a change in our financial policy, can be easily accomplished, and surely no one need complain. It is not inequitable to the West, and is just to ourselves.

All that is necessary in this regard is for our next Legislature, by joint resolution, to change the Constitution, which the succeeding Legislature can ratify, and submit their action to the people, and our existing canal debt can be postponed indefinitely, or to such future time when a sufficient sinking fund can be accumulated by the surplus earnings of the canal, and relieve our people from taxation to meet it. While we are likely to be extraordinarily taxed for war purposes, perhaps for years to come, it is certainly worth our reflection, and we hope some competent legislator, if the Canal Board neglect it, will bring the subject up for action at an early stage of the coming session. There are further reasons which may be urged in regard to this proposed action which we may refer to hereafter. C. F. A.

—Blondin is still performing at the Sydenham Crystal Palace.

PERSONAL.

—Jacob Appley, the owner of the slaver Augusta, who lives at Southold, L. I., and who was recently discharged from Fort Lafayette, where he had been incarcerated for his complicity with Appleton Oaksmith, in the attempt to send the bark Augusta on a slave voyage, is an eccentric individual, according to a bit of his biography in *The Brooklyn Times*. Jake, it appears, is a spendthrift, and if his imprisonment had no other effect it probably prevented him from squandering his money during the time he was locked up with the "State prisoners." Appley's father, a wealthy butcher, died some years ago, leaving Jacob property, the interest whereof amounts to about $10,000 or $12,000 the year. Ex-Collector Schell is his guardian. Having lots of "soap" and not knowing the true uses of money, Appley is a prey to sharpers of every kind and degree. If anybody has anything to sell which nobody else will buy at any price, a customer is always to be found in him. From a race-horse to a rat-trap, it is all the same. If he hasn't the money he gives his note. A year or two ago he was running an old steamboat from Sag Harbor to New-York, for 75 cents the trip. When asked why he engaged in this enterprise, he would reply that he wished to break down the Long Island Railroad, for some imaginary offense. This is but a sample of the ways he devises to rid himself of his money. So extravagant is his outlay, that he is always one or two years ahead of his income. When the news was given of his arrest and imprisonment, no one believed that he was really guilty. He was only the tool and victim of Oaksmith and others who were at the bottom of the undertaking.

—The long-pending suit against Dr. Rowland Williams for the article on prophecy which he contributed to the "Essays and Reviews," is now being tried before Sir S. Lushington, in the Arches Court at London. The articles exhibited against him are very long, setting forth a great number of quotations from the essay, with the Articles of the Church, to which, it is alleged, they are opposed, and winding up with the allegation that the object of Dr. Williams was to deny the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures and to reduce them to the level of the writings of Milton or Luther. Dr. Deane, who appeared for Dr. Williams, contended that the articles charged against his client were many of them the opinions of Baron Bunsen, and only reported by Dr. Williams. Further, he contended that his client had not trespassed on the liberty of thought and discussion allowed to clergymen of the Church of England.

—The members of the Academy of Fine Arts at Paris, are just now in raptures over a picture—the Battle of Solferino—painted by M. Meissonier. This picture, of large size, represents the Emperor, with his entire staff, mounted. Although the work is yet unfinished, the likenesses of marshals, generals, aids, and officers of ordnance, can be easily recognized. M. Meissonier has excelled in what the critics call "the genius of the infinitely small," giving to the most minute features an expression full of meaning. This fidelity is apparent, not only in the faces of men, but in the form of horses, and in the dress of soldier and trappings of steed. In this particular the picture is said to excel the masterpieces of the Dutch painters.

—Lieut.-Col. Hallock of the 9th Regiment N. Y. S. M., an efficient and gallant officer, has been taken from his command by disease contracted through the fatigue and exposure attending his duties. His death will be irreparable to his regiment. He was its pivot, and the sad consolation alone is left to his friends, that he was universally esteemed in civil as in military life. Col. Hallock was a graduate of the New-York City Guard. He rose from its ranks to be its captain, and at the commencement of the war for the Union he was Major of the 9th. He refused the colonelcy and accepted the next position, which he filled with much ability.

—D. U. Martin, the wheery and berry man, is now mining in California, and subsists almost entirely on grapes and apples. The same fruits formed his diet on his sea-voyage from here to the Isthmus, and bananas and oranges on the Pacific side. He had a rough passage out, but was not seasick. Mr. Martin is of opinion that it is not the eating of tropical fruits that produces fatal effects in warm climates, but the drinking of poisonous liquors.

—When the Giant Woman, now at Barnum's Museum, came here she was obliged to have a place prepared for her in the baggage-car, as she was so large that she was unable to get through the door of the regular passenger cars. She is said to be a female Lambert, and beyond all doubt the heaviest woman ever known.

—*The Montreal Advertiser*, alluding to Mr. Seward's "joke" with the Duke of Newcastle, is very charitable. That paper, which is in the service and pay of the rebels residing in Montreal, says:

"We are willing to make every allowance for Mr. Seward's low birth, his defective education, his intemperate habits, and his degrading associations."

—We learn that Mr. Bonner of *The N. Y. Ledger* has made an arrangement with Dr. Windship of Roxbury, Mass., the famous "strong man," by which Dr. W. is to write exclusively for *The Ledger*.

—The *Messager Franco-Americain* calls Dr. Russell "the *fantaisiste* correspondent of *The London Times*."

—Senator Foot and lady arrived in this city yesterday morning, and stopped at the Astor House. They proceed to Washington to-day. The Hon. Van R. Richmond, A. Van Vleck, and Dr. Childs of New-York; Capt. Duane of the United States Engineer Corps, J. E. Whipple of Lansingburg, S. W. Stevens of Montreal, and Homer Ramsdell of Newburgh, are at the Astor House.

—Major Dyer of the U. S. Army, Superintendent of the Armory at Springfield, G. R. Cassin of Toronto, W. H. Phillips of Washington, Dr. S. W. Hunt of Connecticut, G. L. Abbott and family of Washington, F. E. Fullerton of Vermont, G. F. Winslow of Troy, and G. S. Norris of Baltimore, are at the Fifth Avenue Hotel.

—Prince de Joinville is expected from Newport to-morrow. The Comte de Paris and party from Niagara are expected also. F. Gordon Dexter of Boston, W. Sturgis Hooper and family of Boston, M. Clark of Washington, G. P. Rails of St. Louis, and B. F. Edmonds of Boston, are at the Brevoort House.

—N. F. Fitch from Pernambuco, Brazil; the Rev. Dr. Jackson Westchester, W. Duane Dubarry from Canton, China, Col. R. Hawley of Troy, and Mr. Olyphant and H. V. Olyphant from Hong Kong, China, are at the Clarendon Hotel.

—Judge Gould of Rochester, and Col. Waite of the United States Army, are at the St. Nicholas Hotel.

—The Hon. James Dixon of Hartford, and H. G. Pomeroy of Cincinnati, are at the Albemarle Hotel.

THE FUNERAL OF WM. GAZE.—A meeting of the Board of Engineers and Foremen of the Fire Department was held last night at Fireman's Hall, for the purpose of making arrangements for the funeral of Wm. Gaze, who was killed while in the discharge of his duty. Resolutions were offered, expressing sympathy with the family of the deceased, and adopted. The funeral will take place to-day at 1 o'clock, and it is expected that a large number of the members of the Department will be in attendance to pay their last tribute to their departed brother.