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WASHINGTON.

THE PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS—DEBATES IN BOTH HOUSES—MR. WELLS'S TARIFF BILL—THE PENSION AGENT AND APPROPRIATION BILLS—NATIONAL CURRENCY LAW—CONSTITUTIONALITY OF THE TEST OATH—NATIONAL UNION LEAGUE—SOUTHERN REPUBLICAN ASSOCIATION.

BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.

WASHINGTON, Wednesday, Dec. 12, 1866.

In the Senate to-day there was little business transacted. Mr. Trumbull offered a resolution inquiring of the President if he had during the recess filled vacancies which existed while the Senate was last in session, and especially if he had not done so in the case of the Surveyor of the Port of Philadelphia. If so, whether such officers had been paid. At 12:20 the District Suffrage bill came up, and was debated until 4 o'clock, when the Senate adjourned. The debate was not as lively as yesterday. Most of the time was taken up by Garret Davis, who, in a few remarks of two hours length, sought to show that a negro and a white man were two different and distinct persons. He quoted learned authority on the shinbones, skulls, and feet which nature had given the African. To finish up the day's discussion, Saulsbury repeated how well he loved the colored people, and how far his love for them transcended that of the Abolitionists. Dixon offered an amendment making ability to read and write one's name a qualification for the future, and promised to vote for the bill if this were adopted, which is equivalent to saying that he won't vote for it, for it won't be adopted. Doolittle also said he might possibly vote for a qualified suffrage bill, but would, under no circumstances, vote for universal negro suffrage.

There is no doubt of the passage of the bill extending universal suffrage to the citizens of the District.

Mr. Morrill, Chairman of the Senate Committee on the District of Columbia, will next week bring up the Consolidation bill for the District, taking away the powers granted under the three charters to Washington, Georgetown, and the county. A commission will be appointed by the President, to be confirmed by the Senate, who will take charge of the District. The present Board of Trustees of Colored Schools will be abolished, and but one school board and one house be allowed for both races. If any distinction be made, it will only be that there may be separate school rooms for white and black. Almost the only subject on which the citizens will be called to vote will be on taxes.

The House did absolutely nothing to-day in the way of business. The whole morning hour was consumed by Jack Rogers in a speech on Mr. Lawrence's bill to repeal the law of 1790, which provides that no trial for treason shall take place three years after the commission of the act, and which is meant to affect the case of Jeff. Davis. To this leader of the Democracy, his side of the House had assigned the duty to lead off this session by telling to the country their present position. He spoke for a whole hour, and kept the Republican side in roars of laughter. Mr. Rogers defended Jeff. Davis and President Johnson, and, to show his love for the ways of the latter, he used the words "despotism," "tyranny," "unlawful," "unconstitutional," "illegal," "nigger loving," as often as the President did the same words, in his "swinging around the circle" speeches. The following figure of speech brought forth immense laughter from both the floor and galleries. Pointing to Kelley, Thayer and Wilson, and a few other Radicals, who had been annoying him with interruptions, he said: "Hereafter, in eternity, we will find that God Almighty has written in golden letters, upon the front of the altar of Christianity, the name of Andrew Johnson—the man who stood by his country in her peril." Rogers was defeated for a reélection at the last election, and when he said, "I will stand by Andrew Johnson as long as I remain a member of this body," some member said that would not be long. After he had announced, to quote his words, "the position of the Democratic side of the House to be the position everybody knew it to be," the orator sat down, with the perspiration rolling down his face, and amid loud cries of "Go on! Give us several hours more!" The bill was recommitted, and in all probability will never be brought before the House again. The remainder of the session was consumed in discussing Mr. Williams's bill about appointments to office. So many amendments have been offered, accepted, and rejected, that no one appeared to know what the bill is in its present shape; so it was ordered to be reprinted, together with all the amendments. To-morrow it will probably be finally disposed of.

The House Committee on Elections will have before it to-morrow the only case of the session. It is Thomas agt. Arnell, the present member from one of the Tennessee Districts. Arnell is a Radical and Thomas a Johnson man. The latter claims the election of Arnell illegal, because of the unconstitutionality of the present Registry law of Tennessee, which prevents those who were Rebels from voting. The decision the Committee will arrive at will be very important, for the reason that it will form a precedent for several similar cases which will come up in the next Congress.

The bill which passed the House some days ago, providing for the appointment of pension agents, is now before the Senate Judiciary Committee, and is being considered by said Committee. The ideas involved in the bill are very important, and, if concurred in by the Senate Judiciary Committee, it establishes an important principle, and indicates pretty clearly the intention of Congress to interfere with the appointing power of the President. This bill provides that all the pension agents appointed since January, 1866, shall expire in 30 days after the passage of the act, and also that the President shall, within 15 days from the passage of the act, nominate to the Senate persons for pension agents in place of those appointed since January, 1866. The Senate arrived at no conclusion, but will resume its consideration at the next meeting.

The Committee on Appropriations is nearly ready to report the Legislative, Executive and Judicial Appropriation bill. The amount involved in this bill is nearly $20,000,000. The Committee thinks the estimates are larger than they ought to be, and that the utmost economy should be observed in Congress and by the Departments, so that they shall each year be reduced. The Committee intend to scrutinize all of the estimates very closely, and make reductions where it can be done with propriety.

The friends of the Bankrupt bill intend to bring that measure forward again at an early day, when such amendments will be made to it as will insure its passage by the Houses.

The Committee on Banking and Currency to-day agreed upon various amendments to the bill reported last July, but not then acted upon, to amend the National Currency laws. Among other things they provide that the affairs of every association shall be managed by not less than five directors, one of them the President. Every director, during his entire term of office, must be a citizen of the United States, and at least three-fourths of the directors must have resided in the State or Territory or District in which the association is located one year. Each director must own at least 10 shares of stock. Another amendment proposes that the words "Philadelphia and Boston" shall be stricken out from the present law, so that New-York may be the only place of redemption. A new section is added, namely:

No association shall allow any member to withdraw or permit to be withdrawn any portion of its capital, and if loss is sustained by such association equal to or exceeding its undivided profits then on hand, no dividend shall be made, and no dividend shall ever be made by any association while it shall continue its banking operations to an amount greater than its net profits then on hand and deducting therefrom its losses and bad debts.

The Controller of the Currency, with the approbation of the Secretary of the Treasury, as often as may be deemed necessary and proper, is required to appoint a suitable person or persons to make an examination of the affairs of every banking institution. Such person is not to be a director or other officer in any association whose affairs he shall be appointed to examine. No association is to be subject to any other visitorial power, except such as is vested in the several Courts of law and chancery. It is proposed to substitute a new section for the 21st of the amendatory act of March, 1865, so that, upon the transfer and delivery of bonds to the Treasurer, the Controller of the Currency may furnish to the association making the same circulating notes of different denominations in blank, registered and countersigned, equal in amount to 90 per centum of the current market value of the United States so transferred and delivered, but not exceeding 90 per centum of the amount of said bonds at the par value thereof, if bearing interest in coin, at a rate not less than five per centum per annum; and the amount of such circulating notes to be furnished to each association shall not be more in proportion to its paid up capital than as follows:

To each association whose capital shall not exceed $300,000, 90 per centum of such capital; to each association whose capital exceeds $300,000, but does not exceed $500,000, 80 per centum of such capital; to each association whose capital exceeds $500,000, but does not exceed $1,000,000, 70 per centum of such capital; to each association whose capital exceeds $1,000,000, 50 per centum of such capital; but no association shall have an amount of circulating notes exceeding $1,000,000, and every association having a larger amount of circulating notes than is herein prescribed, shall, as soon as practicable, withdraw from circulation and return to the Controller of the Currency to be canceled, all its circulating notes in excess of the limits herein prescribed; and in case any association shall be unable to return its own circulating notes as herein required, it may return the circulating notes of any other National banking association. Any existing bank or banking association organized under the laws of any State not having its proportionate share of banking capital, which shall have applied for authority to become a National bank, or being organized, shall have applied for an increase of capital before July 1, 1866, shall, if such bank be found by the Controller of the Currency to be in good standing and credit, receive authority to become a National Bank; and new associations may be organized in States and Territories which have secured the last ratable proportion of circulating notes, *provided* that the entire amount of circulating notes to be delivered to banks converted from State to National banking associations, or to banks whose capital shall be found as aforesaid, shall not exceed $15,000,000. The total amount of circulating notes to be delivered to new associations so organized shall not exceed $15,000,000 until after the 1st day of January, 1868, when, if any portion of the $15,000,000 of circulating notes allotted for the conversion of existing State banks shall remain unappropriated, the amount so remaining may be used for the organization of new associations, or for the increase of the circulation of banks now organized. The aggregate circulation of National banks is to be restricted as now, and is not at any time to exceed the sum of $300,000,000.

The remainder of the new bill is substantially the same as the one reported last July. The House today, on motion of Representative Hooper, who has the bill in charge, ordered it to be printed.

The Retrenchment Committee are on the track of some startling facts, which will lead to important results by breaking up a system of plundering the Treasury which has grown up during the Rebellion.

Amid the conflicting accounts respecting the question of the constitutionality of the test-oath, as brought before the Supreme Court of the United States, the probabilities strongly incline to the judgment of that Court against the constitutionality of the oath. One of the Supreme Court Judges holds the balance, and there is little or no doubt he will go against the legality of the oath. So far our information is authentic. Of course, any such decision, or a special use of the oath, would not settle the question of its use in all quarters, but it might have a serious influence upon it.

The first case to be called by the United States Supreme Court to-morrow is that of Frederick E. Sickles agt. Boylen W. Evans, after which the case of The Union Manufacturing Company agt. John D. Lounsberry. Judge Curtis and Mr. Keller will appear for the Manufacturing Company, and Mr. Stoughton for the appellee. These are important patent cases. The docket has been entirely relieved of the Southern cases—39 in number, pending from the commencement of the Rebellion—they having been argued, continued, or submitted. The Court will now resume the call of the regular docket.

Commissioner Wells has completed the Tariff bill which the Secretary of the Treasury instructed him to prepare. A gentleman who has seen it says it is more of a revenue measure than protective in its character. The delegation of French importers, who came here with the idea that the duty on wines might be modified from that which passed the House last session, and is now before the Senate Committee, have failed in their mission. The old duty was altogether too low, and the pressure brought to bear by the California and Western wine-growers has convinced Congress that it ought to be considerably increased. The present tariff on wines costing fifty cents or less is 20 cents per gallon and 25 per centum; over, $1 per gallon and 25 per centum. In the bill of the last session, which is now before the Senate Committee, the tariff is fixed on wines costing not over 25 cents per gallon, at 40 cents per gallon, and 25 per centum; over 25 cents per gallon and not over $1, 75 cents per gallon, and 25 per centum; over $1 per gallon, $1 per gallon and 25 per centum. In Mr. Wells's bill, it is understood the tariff will be on wines costing $1 or less, 50 cents per gallon and 25 per centum; costing $1 or over, $1 per gallon and 25 per centum. He proposes considerable reduction on foreign brandy and all kinds of foreign spirits. He proposes, also, a reduction on domestic whisky to $1 25 per gallon. It is not very likely that Congress will adopt the latter suggestion. The present temper of both Houses seems to be for a high protective tariff, embodying the feature of the bill which passed the House at the last session.

The report that the Secretary of the Treasury intended to dispense with the services of the female clerks in his Department creates a great flutter among the fair quill-drivers, and the pressure to retain almost each lady so employed is greater than the previous importunities for appointment. There is no telling where the matter will end. The mode of tactics at present in use is the vehement urging upon the Secretary the justice of gradually lessening the force in order that they may not all be thrown out of employment at once, each lady probably believing herself competent to control sufficient influence to retain her place.

The people of the District, here through a Committee, have asked Congress for an appropriation of about a quarter of a million of dollars to clean the canal here, and drain the city. The chances of the present authorities ever getting the appropriation are very slim.

Gen. Van Wyck, Member elect from the XIth Congressional District of New-York, is here, and is making arrangements for the return of certain arms to his Fenian constituents.

Regarding Rebel property in England, and the settlement recently made by Mr. Morse, the United States Consul in London, with Fraser, Trenholm & Co., the Government has rendered its decision, which repudiates the settlement in toto. The arrangement was made without consultation with either Mr. Dudley, the Consul at Liverpool, or Minister Adams, and the action of Mr. Morse has been entirely set aside.

A large batch of appointments of ministers, ministers-resident, and consuls to foreign countries, were sent into the Senate to-day. Among them was the name of John A. Dix as Minister to France.

A delegation of merchants, planters, and capitalists from New-Orleans arrived in this city last evening, and this morning petitioned Congress to pass a law allowing loyal citizens of Southern States to appeal from the State to the Federal courts in all suits brought against them in the State courts, and which are clearly designed to persecute Loyal men and drive them from the South.

The Annual Meeting of the National Union League of America was held at the League Rooms on Ninth-st. at 12 o'clock to-day. The officers for the ensuing year were chosen, most of the officers being reëlected, as follows: J. M. Edmonds, President; A. Chester and John W. Forney, Vice-Presidents; and W. A. Cook, Secretary. T. G. Baker, Secretary of the State Council of New-York, was chosen Secretary pro tem., in the temporary absence of Mr. Cook. The session was very harmonious, and but little business was done. Another session was held this evening, at which the subject of certain changes in the work of the League was discussed, to cover the present and future issues. Ex-Speaker Grow of Pennsylvania and Mr. Cook held quite an animated discussion on the objects of the League, the former addressing the League at considerable length. The question of the expulsion of Andrew Johnson from the League was also under consideration. The deliberations were being continued at the closing of this dispatch.

The Committee of North Carolinians, headed by Gov. Holden, which has been here for several days, has prepared an address to Congress, setting forth the present condition of affairs in North Carolina, and recommending a plan for the restoration of the State into its former position in the Union. The address will be presented to Congress to-morrow. Mr. Stevens is preparing a bill embodying the recommendations of the address, which he will present to Congress for action in a day or two.

The Southern Republican Association held a meeting at their rooms, on F-st. in this city, to-night, the Hon. Thomas J. Durant in the chair. Gov. Hamilson of Texas moved that the choice of officers elected at a primary meeting of the Association at New-York be concurred in. Carried. The officers alluded to are as follows: Thos. J. Durant, Louisiana, President; Philip Frazer, Florida, E. M. Pease, Texas, and 15 other distinguished Southern loyalists, Vice-Presidents; Dr. R. O. Sidney, Mississippi, Corresponding Secretary; Capt. D. H. Bingham, Recording Secretary. The Chairman remarked, for the information of those not present at a former meeting, that there was a Standing Committee of 15 of the Association, to which all resolutions are reserred, and that at a former meeting the Chair was directed to draw up a report for the next meeting of the Association, embodying the following propositions:

First: That there now exists in the late insurrectionary States, except Tennessee, no valid governments.

Second: That we desire Congress to institute therein governments based on Rebel disfranchisement and universal loyal enfranchisement, irrespective of color or race.

Third: That this Committee be instructed to present their report, when drawn up and submitted to the Association, if received, to the Committee of Fifteen of Congress, and to confer with them on the immediate subject and practicability of instituting said governments.

The Chair then read the report to the meeting, of which the following is an abstract:

"In the latter part of 1861 the States of Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Florida, South and North Carolina, and Virginia, attempted to separate themselves from the Union. They formed an alliance with one another, and raised troops in defiance of the Constitution, each adopting a new constitution of government in opposition to the essential requirements of the national charter, and thus organized and allied, they carried on a war against the nation, in the result of which they were entirely subjugated. The hostile governments of these States, having been thus put an end to, their populations passed, in the absence of a Congressional provision for their Government, under the military control of the Commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the United States, whose duty was simply to hold the subjugated people in order until the will of Congress could be made known. Instead of limiting himself to the performance of this duty, the Commander-in-chief proceeded to summon bodies of men as conventions, with alleged powers of framing State Constitutions and instituting State Governments, designed, after the cessation of hostilities, to exercise rights and powers equal to those of the unshaken members of the Union. The exercise of command, involving necessarily the assumption of legislative powers by an Executive officer, could produce no effect as law for as all legislative powers have been delegated by the sovereign people to Congress, none can be exercised by the Executive. Hence his attempt at legislation is not a law, and the governments he brought into existence in the insurrectionary States, have no legal validity. Vindicating its powers, and conscious of its duties, Congress is now called upon to adopt such measures as will bring the populations of insurrectionary States into harmony with the nation by establishing in either of them a Republican form of Government, whose existence shall be guaranteed by the whole force of the nation. Republican States are the offspring of the loyal popular will, expressed by the furthest utterance of universal suffrage as compatible with the existing condition of human improvement. The right of every male inhabitant above the age of twenty-one years to participate in the election of those who are to make the laws that bind him, and to bring into being such Republican States is now the task of Congress. It is, therefore, the opinion of this Association that Congress should immediately provide by law for the government of the above-named States by securing all the people in all their rights, and this can only be done by overthrowing the present State Governments and establishing new ones, and placing the power in the hands of the loyal people, no matter what may be their color."

The Association was debating the report at midnight. Gov. Hamilton, Judges Paschal and Sherwood of Texas, Wapples and Heistead of Louisiana, Suffold of Alabama, and gentlemen from other States participated in the discussion. The following 13 names compose the Committee alluded to, the two remaining members not having been announced:

Thos. J. Durant, La.; M. J. Safford, Ala.; Lysander Hill, Va.; Geo. W. Ashburn Wapies, La.; R. O. Sidney, Miss.; C. R. Leslie, A. Fernandez, La.; Hawkhart, Va.; W. R. Smith, A. J. Hamilton, Texas; L. Sherwood, C. R. Saba.

THIRTY-NINTH CONGRESS—SECOND SESSION.

SENATE.—WASHINGTON, Dec. 12, 1866.

PETITIONS.

The CHAIR laid before the Senate a petition for abolition of all distinctions on account of sex or color, and the regulation of the elective franchise in the District of Columbia. Ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. WILSON (Rep., Mass.) presented a petition for increased pay to army officers. Referred to the Military Committee.

THE FREEDMEN'S BUREAU.

Mr. WILSON gave notice that on to-morrow he should introduce a bill to amend the act establishing the Freedmen's Bureau.

GOLD MEDAL FOR CYRUS W. FIELD.

Mr. MORGAN (Rep., N. Y.) introduced the following joint resolutions of thanks to Cyrus W. Field, which were referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Resolved, That the thanks of Congress be, and hereby are presented to Cyrus W. Field of New-York, for his foresight, courage and determination in establishing telegraphic communication by means of the Atlantic Cable traversing through mid-ocean and connecting the Old World and the New, and that the President of the United States be requested to cause a gold medal to be struck, with suitable emblems, devices and inscriptions to be presented to Mr. Field.

Resolved, That when the medal shall have been struck the President shall cause a copy of this joint resolution to be engrossed on parchment, and shall transmit the same, together with the medal, to Mr. Field, to be presented to him in the name of the people of the United States of America.

Resolved, That a sufficient sum of money to carry this resolution into effect is hereby appropriated out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated.

EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS.

Mr. TRUMBULL (Rep., Ill.) offered the following resolution:

Resolved, That the President be requested to inform the Senate whether any persons appointed to any office required by law to be filled, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, previous to the assembling of the present Congress, to fill a vacancy, has been continued in such office, and permitted to discharge its functions either by the granting of a new commission or otherwise, since the end of the session of the Senate on the 28th of July last, without the submission of the name of such person to the Senate for its confirmation, and particularly whether a Surveyor or Naval Officer of the Port of Philadelphia has thus been continued in office without the consent of the Senate.

Mr. EDMUNDS (Rep., Vt.)—I would move to amend the resolution by adding, whether if any such person has exercised any such functions, he has received any compensation in salary.

Mr. TRUMBULL accepted the above as an amendment; and as amended the resolution was adopted.

THE DISTRICT FRANCHISE BILL.

At 12:20, there being no further new business before the Senate, the bill to regulate the elective franchise in the District of Columbia was taken up. Mr. Cowan's amendment, to strike out the word "male," being in order.

The CHAIR said Mr. Brown was entitled to the floor.

Mr. BROWN (Rep., Mo.) said he did not think the pending amendment offered by Mr. Cowan was intended in good faith for practical legislation. If it were intended to be put into practical effect, he was one of those who believed it would be necessary to accompany it by a good deal of other legislation to prevent it from degenerating into abuse and corruption. But accepting the matter in the light he had stated, he, for one, was willing to express his opinion freely on this subject. I have to say, said Mr. Brown, that I stand for universal suffrage, and do not recognize the right of society to limit it on any ground of race, color, or sex. I will go further, Sir, and say that I recognize the right of franchise as being an intrinsical and natural right, and I do not believe that society has the right to impose any limitations upon that right that does not spring out of the necessity of the social state itself. These may seem extreme ideas, but they conform to the rigid logic of the question, and I defy any Senator on this floor to escape from them. I have been shocked during the course of this discussion at the expressions which I have heard so often fall from distinguished Senators, saying that they recognize in this right of franchise substantially no right at all; that it was simply a privilege conceded by society for the government which represents society, that it was a gracious boon from somewhere, and for which we should feel proud and thankful. In other words, it was not a right in any sense. Mr. President, I do not hold my liberties by any such tenure. I should grieve to think I was dependent exclusively, in a matter of right, upon the views of society, which may represent only majorities for those rights. On the contrary, I believe that whenever you establish that as the doctrine, whenever you crystallize that idea in the public mind in this country, you ring the death-knell of American liberty, because you lay them open to overthrow, whenever corruptions shall prevail to such an extent, and whenever majorities shall become sufficiently exasperated. Mr. President, so important and crucial, so to speak, do I deem this position, that I trust I may be pardoned if I refer to the abstract ground upon which I deem it to rest, and I do this the more readily, because, in my belief, ultimately the metaphysical always controls the practical life. Now, Sir, what are abstract rights, and are they not intrinsically necessary conditions that go to constitute liberty in society? I had occasion, a year or two since, in discussing this question very fully before my own constituents to review this subject, and as I then presented the argument perhaps more succinctly and briefly than I may now do in the course of debate, I will, by leave, refer to it on this occasion. Mr. Brown then read a lengthy extract from the speech above referred to, and having done so, replied to some arguments advanced by the opponents of female suffrage. The argument that women could not participate in the turmoils of elections and political campaigns was an argument against the hustings, not against suffrage. The argument that women ought not to vote because they could not be embodied in the militia, was not founded in fact. Men are exempted from military service for a variety of reasons, among them physical inability, and were yet allowed the right of suffrage. The same inability could apply in the case of women.

Mr. DAVIS (Dem., Ky.) succeeded Mr. Brown on the floor. He had given his views on the subject of negro suffrage during the last session of Congress, but he could not let this bill pass without again entering his protest against it once more. He then proceeded to speak against the pending measure and the pending amendment. To grant the right of suffrage to woman would be to drag her into the corruptions of politics, and make her a political hack. He was opposed to negro suffrage because he believed the negro inferior to the white man, and did not believe a superior race should grant political power to an inferior race resident among them. The proposition to do such a thing was fanatical and revolutionary; contrary to the teachings of history and the writings of the best philosophers. Ethnologists had described the skulls, shins and feet of the negro as decidedly marking him as belonging to an inferior race. The negro race had been engulfed in the deepest ignorance for 4,000 years without making the least progress. Providence had set him off to himself, and never intended that he should mix with the white race. He might be its slave, but never its equal or superior, as fanaticism now proposed to make him.

Mr. SPRAGUE (Rep., R. I.) followed Mr. Davis in a written speech of considerable length, taking ground in favor of universal suffrage. The people of the South were kept in poverty and ignorance, he said, in order that a class might be elevated to rule. Such was not the case in the North, where the masses had opportunities for information and education. Society in the South was not capable of self-government, and would not be, until molded with Northern ideas. Whenever it was necessary for the cause of liberty and equality for men to have the elective franchise, he would vote for such a measure. At present it was necessary for the cause of liberty and equality that the colored man should have the franchise, and he would, therefore, vote for the bill now before the Senate.

Mr. BUCKALEW (Dem., Pa.) said he wished to explain why he should vote for Mr. Cowan's amendment. He did not understand himself as casting a final vote in the bill. He only wished to affirm by his vote that the arguments for extending the suffrage to negroes applied with great force to women. As a final question he was opposed to the extension of suffrage. The question of suffrage must be taken out of theory into that of practical effect. It was placed by the founders of the Government on the ground that it should be exercised by those who could make the best and most effective use of it. He objected to the extension of suffrage because it would corrupt and degrade elections by pouring into the ballot box a large number of votes subject to influence either social or pecuniary. It will degrade elections, and on that ground he would oppose the extension of suffrage either to females or to negroes. He would be less opposed to this measure if there were a different mode of conducting elections. The effect of the present mode was to divide people into parties and to create a struggle for the balance of power, which led to all manner of corruption. It was possible to turn the scale of the great State of Pennsylvania, for instance, by introducing pernicious influences and bringing them to bear upon a very small number. This was an evil inseparable from Governments controlled by mere majorities. The class of men now proposed to be introduced into the political system would be more approachable than any now in it, more accessible to demagogues, and more easily corrupted. The reform ought to be in another direction. It ought to be toward a reorganization of the system, instead of its enlargement. As a mere choice between two kinds of extension, he should vote for Mr. Cowan's amendment.

At 3 o'clock p. m. Mr. DOOLITTLE (Dem., Wis.) moved that the Senate resume which was disagreed to.

Mr. DOOLITTLE—The amendment, in my judgment, opens a very grave question—a question that appears at first blush, a question upon which the ablest minds are divided, here and elsewhere—a question, however, upon which we are called upon to vote, and therefore one upon which I desire very briefly to state the views which control my judgment when I say I shall vote against the amendment which is now offered. For myself, sir, after giving some considerable reflection to the subject of suffrage, I arrive at this conclusion—that the true base or foundation upon which to rest suffrage in any republican community, is upon the family—the head of the family—because in all civilized communities the family is the unit, and not the individual; what is meant by man in that relation, where he is displaced both according to reason, nature, and to religion; and, sir, if it were left for me to determine what should be the true qualification of a person to exercise the right of suffrage; if it were a mere question, I would fix it upon that—that the head of a family, capable of supporting that family, and that had supported a family, should be permitted to vote, and none others. And, Mr. President, while I know that the question is not a new one, it is impossible for me to treat it as a new question; because suffrage has been extended everywhere beyond the heads of families. Yet, sir, the reason in my judgment why it has been extended is simply this: If certain men have been permitted to vote who were not heads of families, it was because they were exceptions to the general rule, and because it was to be presumed that if they are not now the heads of families, they ought to be, and probably will be. I say, Mr. President, that according to reason, nature and religion, the family is the unit of human society so far as the ballot is concerned, and, in my judgment, it represents this fundamental element of human society. It should, therefore, be cast by the head of the family, and, according to reason, nature and religion, the man is the head of the family. In that relation, while every man is king, every woman is queen, and upon man devolves the responsibility of controlling the external relations of his family, and these external relations are controlled by the ballot, for that ballot or vote which he casts goes to choose the legislators who are to make the laws which are to govern society. Within the family circle man is supreme. He governs by the law of the family, by the law of reason, nature and religion. Therefore, it is a reform which I am not in favor of, conferring the right of suffrage upon woman. Now, Mr. President, one word further upon the subject of suffrage as it concerns the upper races. We are Caucasian, and represent that race. From history, from our education, from our experience, every man of full age of the Caucasian race in this country, as a general rule, is competent to exercise the right of suffrage. In relation to the Africans, Mongolians, Indians and Asiatics in this country, from their history they are incompetent as a general rule, the exception only being competent. Now we may as well speak freely on this question. Where a man tells me, for instance, that the Indians of the States and Territories are competent to exercise this great right of suffrage, he tells me what I cannot be made to believe, and what seems to be impossible for any man to believe. When a man tells me that the Africans in this country just set free on the plantations—speaking of them as a mass, not exceptional cases, for there are a great many exceptional cases of intelligent colored men—are competent to exercise this right; when a man tells me that as a mass these men just set free are competent to exercise the right of suffrage and help to make the laws of this great Republic, he tells me what is perfectly abhorrent to my sense of just reasoning and propriety. Sir, it would be a burlesque on Republican institutions, and we would make ourselves the laughing stock of the world, were we to say that these slaves, three or four millions of them, that have just been set free from a bondage of 200 years in this country, and who, in the country from which they came, have never risen from a position the most degraded of any on the face of the earth. To tell me that they are educated and experienced now, the moment their shackles are stricken off, and are in a condition to exercise this high right of suffrage, it is contrary to reason in my judgment; it seems to me perfectly impossible. Mr. Doolittle then referred to the assertion that the people had decided this question at the polls in the late elections. The issue, he said, instead of having been made was avoided everywhere. The idea of universal negro suffrage, as the basis of reconstruction, was avoided everywhere in every State of the Union. It may be possible that in Massachusetts it was not, I am not so sure about that, but in every State where there was any fear of losing the election it was avoided. In conclusion, Mr. Doolittle said he could not possibly vote for a Universal Suffrage bill—perhaps he might vote for qualified suffrage.

Mr. POMEROY (Rep., Kansas) explained briefly his opposition to the pending amendment. He did not wish to complicate the question before the Senate, which was colored suffrage only. The bill now pending was to be a model for others on the same subject, and he did not wish to bring the question of female suffrage into it.

The Yeas and Nays were then called on Mr. Cowan's amendment to strike out the word "male" before the word "person." The vote was as follows (Republicans, Roman; Democrats, italic):

YEAS—Messrs. Anthony, Brown, *Buckalew*, *Cowan*, Foster, *Nesmith*, *Patterson*, *Riddle*, Wade—9.

NAYS—Messrs. Cattell, Chandler, Conness, Creswell, *Davis*, *Dixon*, *Doolittle*, Edmunds, Fessenden, Fogg, Frelinghuysen, Grimes, Harris, Henderson, *Hendricks*, Howard, Howe, Kirkwood, Lane, Morgan, Morrill, *Norton*, Poland, Pomeroy, Ramsay, Ross, *Saulsbury*, Sherman, Sprague, Stewart, Sumner, Trumbull, Van Winkle, Willey, Williams, Wilson and Yates—37.

ABSENT, OR NOT VOTING—Messrs. Cragin, *Fowler*, *Guthrie*, Johnson, *McDougall*, Nye, Sherman, Thayer—8.

So the amendment was not adopted.

Mr. DIXON (Dem., Conn.) offered the following amendment:

Insert at the end of the first section of the proposed substitute of the Committee on the District of Columbia the words—"*Provided*, That not a person who has heretofore voted in the District should be permitted to vote unless he shall be able at the time of offering to vote, to read and write his name in a public school."

Mr. DIXON said his amendment was intended as a protection to the ballot. He intended to vote for the bill if thus amended—color or race should not be the test of the right to vote—but he doubted the propriety of giving the suffrage to any man who could not read or write.

Mr. HENDRICKS (Dem., Ind.) said that as a general proposition, he was not in favor of basing the right to vote upon intelligence, and in regulating the right of suffrage among the white people, he should not vote for such a proposition as was contained in Mr. Dixon's amendment, but as it was now proposed to introduce into the citizenship of this District a very large class of persons who are known not to be qualified for the exercise of the franchise, he felt it his duty to vote for this qualification.

Mr. SAULSBURY (Dem., Del.) said he believed that, upon the passage of this bill, the never-satisfied Abolition element of the country would put itself to work, and flood the District with as many free negroes as possible, so as to get the District under negro control; a negro Mayor, and a negro Common Council would be elected, so that there should be at least one free negro government in the American Union. Although he was not in favor of female suffrage, for the reasons so well stated by others, still, with a view of denying, as far as possible such a catastrophe as was proposed, he had tried to bring his mind to vote for female suffrage, but it would have been to vote for negro as well as white women. Under no circumstances here, in his own State, or wherever upon this continent he might be located, would he vote for negro suffrage. It was but the beginning of the forcing of negro suffrage everywhere throughout this country. This bill was, in language of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. Pomeroy), a model to be copied after throughout the States—at least throughout the States of the North-West. Neither could he vote for the proposition of the Senator from Connecticut. What was the test? A person who could read or write his name. A wonderful amount of education to qualify a man for the discharge of the high office and trust of voting. Great knowledge of the system of government under which we live did this imply, but to vote for that we would have to vote for negro suffrage to some extent. He (Saulsbury) had no more prejudices against the negro race than gentlemen who are assumed to be their warmest friends. He knew them much better than they did. He had received many more acts of kindness from them, and done many more acts of kindness for them than their pretended friends. If he knew his own heart to-day, the only recollections of his childhood and the experiences of his life would teach him that whenever it was proper to extend to them an act of kindness, which it was in his power to do, he would do it. Born in their midst, with them as the playmates of his childhood and as members of his own father's household, he had no unkindliness for them, and he would say their true friends were not to be found among that class of men who were clamoring for their equality of rights. Their true friends were those who had known them and had been taught from early infancy to treat them with that kindness with which an inferior race ought to be treated by a superior race.

ADJOURNMENT.

At the conclusion of Mr. Saulsbury's remarks, the Senate, on the motion of Mr. Henderson (Rep., Mo.), adjourned.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

SURVEY OF THE LAKES.

Mr. PAINE (Rep., Wis.) introduced a bill for the annual publication of the report on the progress of the survey of the Northern and North-Western lakes. Referred to the Committee on Printing.

CALIFORNIA LAND TITLES.

Mr. MCRUER (Rep., Cal.) introduced a bill to equal the titles of land in the town of Santa Clara, California. Referred to the Committee on Public Lands.

CREDENTIALS OF A TEXAS REPRESENTATIVE.

Mr. COOPER (Dem., Tenn.) presented the credentials of Mr. Epperson as Representative from the IId Congressional District of Texas. Referred to the Reconstruction Committee.

ENLARGING A RIVER CHANNEL.

On motion of Mr. BRANDEGEE (Rep., Conn.) the Committee on Commerce was instructed to inquire into the expediency of making appropriations for enlarging and maintaining the channel of the river Thames at Norwich.

STATE TAX ON NATIONAL BANKS.

Mr. BLAINE (Rep., Me.) asked leave to offer the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Committee on the Ways and Means of the Loyal States be directed to inquire into the expediency of assigning to each Loyal State the right and power to tax the national banks, within its limits, at a rate not exceeding two per cent annually on the capital stock, said tax to be in lieu of all national taxes except one-fourth of one per cent on the average annual circulation for the expenses of the Currency Bureau and to be accepted by the Loyal States as satisfaction in full for all claims against the Government for expenses incurred in raising and organizing troops for the late war other than those that may be assessed and paid under the existing law.

Mr. HARDING (Rep., Ill.) objected and the resolution was not received.

UNITED STATES CURRENCY.

Mr. PRICE (Rep., Iowa) asked leave to offer a resolution instructing the Committee on Banking and Currency, to report what amount of United States currency has been retired and destroyed under the act of last session; the amount now being destroyed, whether the notes so destroyed are counted by different men in different offices; what safeguards are in use for the certain destruction of all the United States notes which are now authorized by law to be destroyed, whether there is an accumulation of such notes on hand; whether a complete record is kept of all denominations, whether such record is kept in more than one office, and whether any further checks or guards are necessary to secure the certain destruction of all United States currency now authorized to be drawn from circulation; also declaring that, in the judgment of the House, a more speedy withdrawal of currency from circulation than is authorized by the act of last session ($4,000,000 a month) would not add to the general welfare and financial safety of the country.

Mr. WENTWORTH (Rep., Ill.) objected, and the resolution was not received.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.

Mr. MILLER (Rep., Pa.) asked leave to offer the following:

Whereas, Several of the States lately in rebellion have, through their Legislatures, refused to ratify the amendments to the Constitution of the United States, proposed by the XXXIXth Congress at its first session; therefore,

Resolved, First, That said amendments are deemed necessary for the preservation of the Union, and are required, in order to guarantee to each state a republican form of government.

Second, That no State lately in rebellion against the Government of the United States ought to have a representation on this floor, so long as such States decline the ratification of said amendments.

Third, That said amendments are offering to the late rebellious States terms, precedent to admission of representatives, more conciliatory than they had a right to expect, and if they continue to refuse to ratify the same conditions, more stringent would be required.

Fourth, That the doctrine of universal amnesty to those who endeavored in the late bloody conflict to dismember this Republic, ought to be discarded by every loyal patriot.

Mr. HARDING (Rep., Ill.) objected, and the resolution was not received.

VENTILATION OF THE HOUSE CHAMBER.

Mr. BOUTWELL (Rep., Mass.) asked leave to offer a resolution directing the doorkeeper to have all the doors and windows leading to the hall and galleries opened each day for two hours after the adjournment, and for two hours before the meeting of the House, so as to obtain proper ventilation.

Mr. ASHLEY (Rep., Ohio) objected and the resolution was not received.

THE PUNISHMENT OF TREASON.

The bill reported yesterday by Mr. Lawrence (Ohio) from the Judiciary Committee, respecting the provisions of the law of April, 1790, so as to prevent treason and capital offenses from being barred by the statute of limitations, came up as the first business in the morning hour.

Mr. JENCKS (Rep., R. I.) obtained the floor, and spoke in opposition to the bill. The act of 1790, he said, provided the punishment of death for four offenses—treason, wilful murder, piracy and forgery. Forgery had since ceased to be a capital offense; murder was excepted from the limitation of the act; piracy could be punished in any civilized nation. This bill therefore applied only to cases of treason. He considered it impolitic and unwise to meddle with the statutes of limitation. They were statutes of repose and peace. Courts had of late years treated them with greater respect than formerly, and in no class of cases should they be more stringently applied than in cases arising during periods of sedition and rebellion. All persons to be affected by the proposed change of the law had been within the military and civil power of the Government for twenty months. If indictments had not been found and the guilty prosecuted and punished, it was owing to the insufficiency of the judicial department and the clemency of the Executive. It was here that the remedy should be applied. If this Congress should repeal this statute of limitation, another Congress might repeal those statutes of indemnity and limitation passed by the last Congress, and thus revive the causes of prosecution against thousands of servants of the Republic who had executed in the army the commands