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WASHINGTON.

A SENSATION IN THE HOUSE.

MR. HEWITT SAYS HIS LETTERS ARE OPENED AT THE NEW-YORK POST-OFFICE—TELEGRAMS NO SAFER THAN POSTAL CARDS.

The House yesterday passed an extreme resolution, assuming absolute power over all telegrams. During the debate, Mr. Hewitt charged that his campaign letters were opened in the New-York Post-Office. The charge created a sensation. Mr. Platt (Rep.) offered a resolution for an investigation, but objection was made and the matter went over. Republicans in Washington think the House Committee in Louisiana is wasting its time. Mr. Bogy defended Gov. Grover in the Senate yesterday.

TELEGRAMS NO LONGER PRIVATE.

THE HOUSE ASSUMES ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY OVER THEM—A STARTLING CHARGE AGAINST THE NEW-YORK POST-OFFICE.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.]

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—The House, following the precedent set by itself at the last session, has taken the most extreme ground possible in regard to the telegraphic controversy. It has declared by a large majority that an investigating committee can issue its subpena upon every telegraph operator in the country, directing him to bring before it the entire files of his office, and that the House must enforce such demand. Three distinct propositions were presented by the Judiciary Committee this morning. Mr. Lynde, representing the majority of the committee, consisting entirely of Democratic members, submitted a resolution which maintained the right of Congress, whenever any material issue is involved, to enforce the production of telegrams without any such description being furnished as must necessarily be made the basis of their production in a court of justice.

Mr. Hurd, for himself and the Republican members of the committee, substantially denied this right to Congress; and while he maintained the power to call for any telegrams bearing on the subject under investigation, he would require at the same time that a basis somewhat similar to that required in the courts should be laid; in other words, the telegrams which the committee desired in his opinion must be identified by some description or convenient particularity. His resolution did not require that the exact contents of the telegram or even its substance should be given in the subpena, nor that its particular date should be stated, but simply that the names of one or both of the persons between whom the dispatches passed should be furnished, the general subject of them named, or some other description given which would enable the person on whom the subpena *duces tecum* was served to identify them.

The Knott resolution, which received the support of no other member of the committee, went still further than either of these, and declared in so many words that telegraphic communication is entitled to no more privilege than any statement made orally; that in short the telegraph company can have and can protect no secrets, but is compelled to deliver up the entire files of its offices upon the first demand of an investigating committee, whether that committee describes the dispatches which it needs or not. The most notable speech of the day was that made by Mr. Hurd in support of his proposition. This gentleman at the last session of Congress distinguished himself as a lawyer of unusual ability and clearness of perception, and his remarks to-day in defense of the constitutional right of the citizen to be protected in his person, papers, and effects against unreasonable search, was as able as any of his efforts on previous occasions. The House adopted the Knott resolution by an almost strictly party vote.

It is to be hoped that President Orton will still refuse to allow his employés to produce dispatches not so described as to make their identification possible, in order that a judicial decision in regard to the power of the House to throw out its drag-net over the files of telegraph offices, and gather in private dispatches by the wholesale, may be given.

Some remarks made by Gen. Garfield, who took the ground that a telegraphic dispatch was as sacred as a letter sent through the mails, called forth from Mr. Hewitt a most startling accusation against the New-York Post-Office. He said that he holds the same position on that point that Gen. Garfield does, but that even letters passing through the New-York Post-Office are opened and examined before they are received by him. In regard to the dispatches which as chairman of the Democratic Committee he had sent over the telegraph lines, he wished to say that he had no objection whatever to their production before any committee, and that he had already informed President Orton of the Western Union Company that he was at liberty to produce any and all dispatches which he had sent during the campaign. Mr. Hewitt's serious accusation against the New-York Post-Office created a great sensation in the House; and Mr. Platt immediately offered a resolution providing for a committee of members of the House to make an investigation of the charge. This was objected to by Mr. Luttrell, and as it could only be received by unanimous consent was not brought before the House. Mr. Hewitt privately explains that his attention was first called to the matter by an anonymous letter written to him by a person who said he was a clerk in the New-York Post-Office, and who told him that his letters were all opened by the use of steam and examined before he received them. Subsequently he noticed that the flaps of a majority of the letters which he received from that office were wrinkled, as though they had been opened, while those received through other post-offices were almost invariably smooth. He had shown these letters to a number of experts, who gave it as their opinion that the letters had been opened and resealed. He had never called the attention of any of the Post-Office officials to this fact because he had supposed it would be utterly useless to do so.

Postmaster-General Tyner, who occupied a seat on the floor when Mr. Hewitt made his speech, said to those who spoke with him on the subject that he never had received any intimation that Mr. Hewitt's letters had been tampered with, and that the accusation now made surprised him very greatly. If Mr. Hewitt suspected any such interference with his correspondence, he said it was his duty to report it to the department. Any such report would have received immediate attention. The department has the means of ascertaining within 48 hours whether letters are opened in any particular post-office or not. A public accusation like that made by Mr. Hewitt this afternoon, Mr. Tyner said, would put the guilty persons on their guard, if any such there were, and make the detection of the crime more difficult. It is his purpose, however, to request Mr. Hewitt to give him all the facts on which he bases his suspicion, and to make a thorough investigation of it. It is not understood that Mr. Hewitt suspects Postmaster James of having any knowledge whatever of this matter. That officer has the confidence of the entire New-York delegation, without respect to party, and Mr. Hewitt himself, in a brief speech which he made last session, spoke in very high terms of Postmaster James, recognizing his efficiency and uprightness in the conduct of his office.

THE PARTIES HOLDING OFF.

THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE PRESIDENCY NOT YET APPOINTED.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.]

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—Neither house has yet appointed its committee on the disputed Presidential election, although it is now nearly a week since resolutions authorizing them were passed in both houses. The Senate is waiting for the House, holding that as that body originated the proposition it should be the first to create its branch of the quasi joint committee; but the Democrats in the House are holding back to have the Senate show its hand first. They want to see what kind of men will be selected to represent the Senate. If Republican partisans are chosen they will probably send Democratic partisans from the House to meet them. There is, however, no probability that any except fair-minded men will be selected by the Senate. It will be manifestly improper to put men upon the committee who are opposed to the object for which it was created, namely, the discovery if possible of some method of action in relation to the counting of the votes upon which both houses can agree. The delay in creating the committee illustrates well the attitude of the parties on the whole question of the Presidency. Each hesitates to take any decisive step, and procrastinates day after day in the hope that the opposing party will develop its purposes.

OREGON IN THE SENATE.

BOGY THE CHAMPION OF GROVER—EATON THE PROPOUNDER OF A NOVEL IDEA—BURNSIDE'S AND SHERMAN'S SPEECHES.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.]

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—Apparently for want of something else to do, the Senate is wasting a great deal of time over the Oregon matter. It is pretty well understood that the Democrats do not intend to attempt to profit by Gov. Grover's trick, but the topic affords an opportunity for discussing the whole subject of the disputed Presidential election, which a number of Senators are taking advantage of.

Nobody has yet been found with partisanship enough to make him so obtuse to the glaring political immorality of Gov. Grover's action as openly to defend it, except Mr. Bogy of Missouri. He began, like his colleagues, with apologies for the motives of the man, and has at last, after making nearly a dozen speeches, worked himself into the belief that Gov. Grover's behavior was entirely justifiable. The Missouri Senator has done the most of the Democratic talking on the question, but all that he has said has not been as effective as was the two minutes' speech of Gen. Burnside to-day. The General said that the action of Gov. Grover in handing the certificates of the Republican electors to Cronin, his political friend and their political enemy, and in making no protest when Cronin refused to deliver to them their certificates, was enough to convince him that Grover was not an upright, honest man. He believed that Grover's name would be a synonym for trickster in the future politics of the country.

In the course of the debate to-day Senator Eaton declared that under no circumstances would either of the Senators from his State claim the election of Tilden upon the vote of Cronin. In reference to the counting of the electoral votes, Mr. Eaton put forth the novel idea that the President of the Senate is not of necessity the presiding officer of the joint convention, and that the convention may choose somebody else to occupy the chair. If this is the Democratic plan, it will be found very difficult of execution. Another of Mr. Eaton's theories was that the President of the Senate has no more power to count the vote than one of the pages.

Mr. Sherman, talking nominally on the Oregon resolution to-day, made a speech on the Louisiana case and on the general result of the election. In the course of it he said that if it is clear that Gov. Hayes has not a majority of the legal votes, God forbid that he should accept the office. He believed, however, that as the case now stood, the votes of South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana are upon the same footing of law and honesty as the returns from New-York and Ohio.

ALABAMA CLAIMS.

WINDING UP THE BUSINESS OF THE COURT—EIGHT MILLION DOLLARS LEFT ON HAND.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.]

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—The legal term of the Court of Commissioners of Alabama Claims will expire by limitation on the 31st inst., and its awards will be ready for publication to-morrow, as all cases which, under the existing law, come under the jurisdiction of the court have been disposed of. It is not expected that Congress will provide for any extension of the official term of the court. Of the gross sum of $15,500,000 awarded to the United States by the Geneva tribunal about one-half will remain after the payment of all judgments; and as the premium on the gold in which the award was paid and the accumulated interest have more than covered the expenses of the court, nearly $8,000,000 will remain to be disposed of by Congress. Several modes of disposing of this money have been suggested, and bills for the purpose are now pending in Congress. The prospect that one of them will be passed this session is not now good.

MORRISON ON THE WRONG TRACK.

HIS COMMITTEE WASTING THEIR TIME—NOTHING TO BE GAINED BY PROVING REPUBLICAN INTIMIDATION.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.]

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—The reports of the proceedings of the two committees who are investigating the Louisiana election are read with great interest by everybody in Washington. The testimony taken by the House Committee has thus far had very little bearing upon the questions at issue, with the exception of its demand on the Returning Board for its papers and an explanation of the ground on which it based its action. The tendency of the Democratic witnesses has been rather to shake confidence in the validity of the vote actually returned for the Democrats than otherwise. For instance, no polls were thrown out in Orleans Parish, and yet Mr. Morrison's committee has examined several colored Democratic witnesses to prove that there was intimidation there. The only result of this testimony, if the point was established, would be to show that had the matter been brought properly before the Returning Board the polls where this intimidation existed ought to have been rejected in the count. This would have deprived the Democrats of a part of their majority. The Democratic committee seems to forget that under the peculiar election law of Louisiana intimidation, no matter who is guilty of it, invalidates the election at the poll where it occurs. If it is the object of Mr. Morrison's committee simply to show that there was intimidation on both sides, and that it was aimed against Democrats as well as Republicans, he may succeed in doing it, but it is difficult to see what is to be gained by it. The Democrats have been very strenuous that the Returning Board should take cognizance of no complaints of intimidation, except such as were brought to its attention strictly in accordance with the provisions of the 26th section of the Election law, that is by an affidavit of a supervisor or commissioner of election. But no such case of the intimidation of a Democratic voter was ever reported by any election officer as far as is remembered. As the supervisors were all Republicans such certificates could hardly have been expected from them, but at every poll in the State the law required that there should be at least one Democratic commissioner, and it was his duty to have reported the intimidation of his party associates if any existed. There is now, therefore, no way for the Democrats to gain anything by proving that the Republicans intimidated Democratic negroes, and it would seem as though the House committee was wasting its time.

The only investigation of the Louisiana case that can do any good is one that is directly aimed at the point of controversy between the two parties, and that is the question whether the Returning Board acted honestly or fraudulently in its canvass of the votes. To this point the Senate committee seems to be directing its inquiries. The doings of the board in the secret sessions, when the returns from the contested precincts were decided upon, ought to be brought to the light, and the evidence on which each case rests made public, as in South Carolina and Florida. No committee until it has this evidence can pass an intelligent judgment on the work of the Returning Board. Until that evidence is produced, the board is entitled by all the principles of law and justice to a presumption in its favor. Nobody has a right to presume that the board has committed a fraud until it is proved, and to claim the State unreservedly for Tilden is such a presumption.

NOT CANDIDATES.

It was stated in the Washington dispatches yesterday that Mr. E. Jackson, formerly Assistant District-Attorney under E. Delafield Smith, was an applicant for the position of District-Attorney to be vacated in a short time by Mr. Bliss. Mr. J. C. Jackson, the person whom it was intended to name, was formerly Assistant District-Attorney under Edwards Pierrepont. Gen. Stewart L. Woodford is not a candidate for the office of District-Attorney to succeed Mr. Bliss. His presence here on Tuesday on professional business gave rise to the rumor that he was to be Mr. Bliss's successor. He has, however, no aspirations in that direction.

WASHINGTON NOTES.

WASHINGTON, Wednesday, Dec. 20, 1876.

The House Committee on Pacific Railroads to-day reconsidered the vote by which they heretofore authorized their chairman to report for passage the Senate bill extending the time for the completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad, this action being taken with a view to considering certain amendments for the protection of homestead and preemption settlers, &c. The session was mainly occupied in discussing a new proposition which was to-day informally submitted by the friends of the Texas Pacific Railroad. It provides that the Southern Pacific Company of California shall be allowed to build 700 miles of the Western portion of the Transcontinental line under the provisions of the original Atkins bill, making the through line an open highway for the Government and people and all other railroad companies, and reserving to Congress the right to regulate the charges for freight and passengers. This concession is understood to be satisfactory to the California interests. The committee adjourned till to-morrow without action on the matter.

The majority of the House Committee on the Judiciary decided to-day that special investigating committees have the right to send for telegraphic dispatches when in the opinion of a committee such dispatches are essential to the purposes of the inquiry, or in other words, that any committee's demands for telegrams, &c., must be complied with, under penalty of being held in contempt of the House. This was in substance the position taken by Mr. Lynde, chairman of the sub-committee, to whom the subject was referred for report. Messrs. Hurd and McCrary, the other members of the committee, reported that in their opinion the telegrams called for should be specifically described. In this view they were sustained by Messrs. Hoar and Frye; but Mr. Lynde's proposition was adopted by a vote of 5 against 4, the affirmative votes being cast by Messrs. Knott, Hunton, Ashe, Lynde, and Caulfield. Messrs. Lord and Lawrence were absent.

The Supervising Architect of the Treasury, in his annual report, just printed, renews the recommendation of his predecessor that new buildings for Custom-house and Assay offices be erected in New-York City. He says that the accommodations contained in the present Custom-house at that place are entirely inadequate; and the repairs and alterations necessary to provide temporary facilities for the transaction of the increasing business are constant and a source of continual expense. The present Assay Office is entirely unfit for the purpose for which it is used, and the building is unsafe.

CHARGES AGAINST THE POST-OFFICE.

DENIAL OF MR. HEWITT'S ALLEGATIONS OF TAMPERING WITH PRIVATE LETTERS.

A dispatch from Washington yesterday afternoon stating that Abram S. Hewitt, in the course of the debate on the refusal of the Western Union Telegraph Company to submit its files of messages to an investigating committee, had charged that his private letters had been opened in the New-York Post-Office, caused considerable comment among the officials in this city. Postmaster James said to a TRIBUNE reporter that he could not believe that Mr. Hewitt had made such a charge; he was confident that Mr. Hewitt's language in the excitement of the debate had not been correctly reported. Mr. Hewitt had never made any complaint to him or even hinted that his mails had been tampered with, and there could be no foundation for such a charge. The Post-Office business had been conducted on strict business principles. No partisan bias was allowed in any of the departments, and the politics of the men was not inquired into. The letters passing through the office went through the hands of thirty assorters, working side by side in one room, where any person touching a letter was in full view of a score of others, and it was an impossibility for a letter to be tampered with in private, so many were the checks and safeguards adopted. Mr. Gayler, Superintendent of the City Delivery, and Mr. Yeoman, Night Superintendent, pronounced the charge, as far as their office was concerned, absurd and untrue. Mr. James expressed the utmost anxiety for a speedy investigation, and at once sent the following telegram to Mr. Hewitt:

The Hon. A. S. HEWITT, House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.:

I am informed that you charge on the floor of Congress that your letters passing through this office are or have been opened before reaching your hands. Do you charge that it is or has been actually or probably done in this office? If so, please supplement your charges with a motion for immediate investigation, as I pronounce such an accusation utterly and absolutely false.

T. L. JAMES, Postmaster.

The first intimation that an attack on the Post-Office Department was intended by the Democrats in the present Congress, came out in an interview on the general political outlook with a gentleman known to be in Gov. Tilden's confidence, which was published in THE TRIBUNE of Dec. 1. Referring to the acts of Federal officials, the gentleman referred to the desperation of the office-holders. The reporter asked him what he meant by the desperation of those in power. He was informed that evidence was in possession of Gov. Tilden's friends that the United States mails had been tampered with since the day of election. Upon asking for further and distinct particulars in regard to this charge, it was added that "the tampering had not been done in the New-York office, that Postmaster James was entirely blameless, and that the entire matter would be laid before the American people at the appropriate time." Subsequent inquiries of the Democratic managers here were answered in the same manner, all taking occasion to speak in the highest terms of commendation of the management of the New-York office.

INCENDIARIES AT LITTLE ROCK.

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Dec. 20.—The frequent fires in this city have caused intense excitement. The City Council resumed its session to-night, which was last night interrupted by the alarm. The officials will adopt measures for the better protection of property. A new fire apparatus was ordered to-night, and a large force of watchmen employed by property-owners will guard the business portion of the city. It is believed by many, and charged by *The Evening Star* of this date, that incendiaries and thieves have banded together for purposes of plunder, and that vigilance committees should be organized. During the fire of last night an unsuccessful effort was made to burn the brick block owned by Mayor John G. Fletcher, at the corner of Main and Fourth-sts., by igniting a bale of cotton which had been previously saturated with kerosene oil.

The insurance on the property destroyed is $68,600. The total loss is estimated at $150,000. The losses from fire within the past week aggregate $350,000. The origin of the fires is shrouded in mystery.

OBITUARY.

FRANCIS A. LEGGETT.

Francis A. Leggett, the well-known restaurant and hotel-keeper, died about 2 o'clock yesterday morning, after several weeks of sickness. He was born in 1819 in Norfolk-st., between Broome and Grand-sts. When 13 years of age he was employed in Russell's oyster and chop house at Bowery and Grand-st. In 1844, under the firm name of Ferris & Leggett, a restaurant was opened at No. 52 Chatham-st. In 1858 the business was moved to the present site at No. 46 Chatham-st. Thus, for 32 years Mr. Leggett had transacted his business in the same block. Mr. Ferris, his first partner, died in 1861, and a short time afterward Alfred Storms was taken into the firm, the name of which was changed to Leggett & Storms. Many improvements and additions have been made, and this property is now regarded as valuable. Mr. Leggett leaves a widow, but no children.

HENRY W. GREEN.

Henry W. Green, who died on Thursday at Trenton, N. J., was born in 1804. He was graduated at Princeton College in 1820, and in 1825 was admitted to the bar. He was member of the Legislature in 1842, and also took part in the Constitutional Convention of 1844. He was Chief-Justice from 1846 to 1860, and in 1861 was appointed Chancellor. In that position he attained distinction, his opinions being everywhere treated with respect.

THE INSURANCE COMPANIES INQUIRY.

ALBANY, Dec. 19.—In the report of an interview with Mr. Smyth of the Insurance Department, published in THE TRIBUNE of Dec. 16, an inaccuracy crept in, which, in justice to Mr. Smyth and his predecessor, Mr. Chapman, should be corrected at once. Mr. Smyth did not say that no examinations of life insurance companies had been made during Mr. Chapman's term. On the contrary, at least 30 such examinations were made, Mr. Smyth himself as Deputy conducting several of them. What was intended by the statement was that the two companies then under investigation had not been examined by Mr. Chapman, he, being a very conservative gentleman, and having full confidence in the sworn statements of these companies, as any honest man might have had, and the tenor of the question of the correspondent was such as to lead Mr. Smyth to believe that the two companies were referred to rather than the insurance companies generally. No new developments have been made known regarding the insurance failures.

CRIMES AND CASUALTIES—BY TELEGRAPH.

KNOXVILLE, Tenn., Dec. 20.—Messrs. Allison & McClurg's warehouse was burned this morning, and George H. Smith, a prominent citizen, was killed by a falling wall.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Dec. 20.—Sheriff Manning of Tunica County, Miss., was arrested at Jackson, Miss., a day or two since for the murder of a man named Harvey of Louisville at Austin, Miss., several weeks ago.

HALIFAX, Dec. 20.—A schooner laden with fish struck on the Thrum Cap Shoals at the entrance to Halifax harbor on Monday night and went to pieces. Her owner, Mr. Baker of Jeddore, and a man named Gould, were drowned.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Dec. 20.—John S. & B. E. Dickerson were arrested here yesterday on a requisition from the Governor of Massachusetts on a charge of obtaining money under false pretenses. After their failure here they had removed to Arkansas City.

WORCESTER, Mass., Dec. 20.—The first serious accident which has ever taken place on the Boston, Barre and Gardner Railroad occurred about a mile north of the Princeton station early this afternoon, when a passenger train ran into a mixed train, completely demolishing both engines, one passenger, one baggage and three freight cars, and fatally injuring three persons. The engineers and firemen leaped from the engines, and all escaped injury except Mr. Willey, who received injuries which will probably prove fatal. The passengers, about 20 in number, were all more or less bruised. Charles O. Lamb, a sewing-machine agent, had his head crushed so that he died.

SOUTHERN AFFAIRS.

LATEST PHASES OF THE SITUATION.

TO WHOM SHALL TAXES BE PAID IN SOUTH CAROLINA—VIRGINIA CONDEMNS FEDERAL INTERFERENCE—THE INVESTIGATIONS.

The Democratic House at Columbia, S. C., has asked Hampton to demand that taxes be paid to him. Congressman Rainey relates some important facts in regard to intimidation in South Carolina. The Virginia Legislature has passed resolutions condemning Federal interference at Columbia. The investigating committees at New-Orleans are both taking testimony now. The House Committee has sent some of their number to the Red River parishes.

LOUISIANA.

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE.

CASSANOVE AND ANDERSON OF THE RETURNING BOARD—A VICTIM OF REPUBLICAN VIOLENCE.

NEW-ORLEANS, Dec. 20.—At to-day's session of the House Committee George A. Branstorple, colored, testified that he voted the Democratic ticket and was afterward knocked down and beaten, then arrested and sent to the parish prison for 10 days because he voted the Democratic ticket.

Charles Cassanove of the Returning Board testified that all the members of the board belonged to the Republican party; there was a recommendation to fill the vacancy, but the board could not agree; Mr. Kennedy was proposed. Witness refused to answer whether or not he favored the election of Kennedy as a member of the board. He related the general mode of procedure of the board in counting the votes, but stated nothing new. When asked whether he intended to bring for the inspection of the committee the original returns of supervisors, he said he had not brought the papers; he could not bring them without the consent of the board; he would consult with the other members of the board, and if they consented he would bring the returns; he didn't know whether the Tilden or the Hayes electors had a majority of the votes cast according to the supervisors' statements; he never heard any of the members say who had a majority; they threw out two parishes and several polls in other parishes; he thinks the vote thrown out aggregated several thousand, but couldn't say how many—probably 4,000 or 5,000. Mr. Cassanove gave testimony similar to that of Gen. Anderson last night regarding the three questioned polls in New-Orleans Parish and most other matters as to the action of the board.

Gen. Anderson, on being recalled, handed a statement to the committee, saying it was the original statement signed by all the members of the Returning Board, showing the vote for Presidential electors in the State. The statement contained the aggregate vote, not the vote by parishes. Gen. Anderson said he ordered the clerk to make out a complete statement of the vote by parishes to be filed before the Secretary of State, but did not know whether that was done. "As we got through a parish," he said, "we sent it to the clerk marked 'completed,' to be immediately entered on the list; when polls were rejected they were marked 'rejected' and sent to the clerk. We could not make a complete list of the vote by parishes in time to promulgate it according to law, but ordered the clerk to do it afterward; I was absent when the three parishes were being completed by the board; the clerk made the addition of the votes, leaving out the polls rejected; the board revised these additions. In the statement handed to the committee it was evident that the figures and letters had been changed. This was explained by Gen. Anderson, saying that some of the parishes had been misplaced by the clerk, but he did not remember very well how the mistake occurred, and that the clerk had satisfactorily explained it at the time."

Thomas C. Anderson was cross-examined and testified as follows: "I am 56 years of age and a planter, but have been a merchant; was a Confederate soldier during the war; am worth in real estate situated in Louisiana about $100,000; became a Republican in 1870; we based our reasons for throwing out polls on what we considered good and sufficient evidence; we took up contested parishes after we were through with uncontested ones, and gave ample opportunity to all to take testimony; in some instances we extended the time for taking testimony; we threw out the entire Parish of East Feliciana because we had good reasons for so doing; we had no time to allow witnesses to be brought from the parish here, and if the innocent suffered for the guilty in losing the effect of their franchise it was their own fault; they had no business to be in bad company."

SENATE INVESTIGATIONS.

SENATOR M'DONALD WANTS TO SEE THE PROTESTS—TAKING TESTIMONY BEGUN.

NEW-ORLEANS, Dec. 20.—The Senate Committee met at 11:30 a. m. A statement of the votes rejected in each parish, and at what polls rejected, was received from the Returning Board. Senator McDonald made a motion that a subpena *duces tecum* issue to the Returning Board for all protests and affidavits accompanying the consolidated statements of supervisors; also for the returns of the commissioners of each poll in each parish. Senator Howe, chairman, said he could not understand what figure the protests and affidavits, which formed the basis of the action of the Returning Board, could cut in this investigation, unless the committee proposed to review the action of the board in an appellate capacity. Senator McDonald said it was not the province of the committee to determine anything; the committee wanted only the facts. The question is being considered by the committee.

Benjamin James, a colored man, United States Deputy Marshal, who was shot by a party of white men while carrying a ballot-box to the polls, gave his testimony today. It was similar to that given before the Returning Board and published in the papers and in Senator Sherman's report. James also testified that just previous to the election the colored people from the country went into the town of Monroe armed in order to protect themselves on the way; that a number of guns had been discovered in the town by the United States troops.

It having been asserted by Democratic counsel yesterday that Eliza Pinkston, the colored woman who testified before the Returning Board after being carried there on a litter, had been seen running up the steps of the Custom-house, the following certificate was filed to-day by counsel for the Republicans:

NEW-ORLEANS, Dec. 20.

We certify that the physical condition of Eliza Pinkston, residing at No. 242 Gravier-st., will not permit her to make the exertion required to attend the committee court. We believe that for some days she will be confined to her bed, and that any exertion at this time is likely to add a serious complication to her present debilitated condition.

C. R. WHITE, M. D.
A. W. SMYTH, M. D.

IMPORTANT EVIDENCE AT THE EVENING SESSION.

At the evening session of the Senate Committee, Cora Williams (colored) of the First Ward, Omachita Parish, testified that she was whipped severely by Democratic bulldozers the same night that Marion Rhodes's body was brought by and Pinkston was killed; she said the men who did the whipping were Democrats; had seen them riding about day and night; these men belonged to Bill Keobold's company; he was on the road when they whipped me, and said, "Give her h——, but don't let her holler;" he gave Rhodes some paper, which he stuffed into my mouth; Geo. Phillips blindfolded me; I asked him not to whip me; Dr. Kennedy said, "Give her h——;" Dr. Potts was there; after they gave me 200 lashes, he said, "Boys, that's enough; she's not able to take what she ought to have;" Wills Fraser lived near me; I heard him grunting when they whipped him; Marion Rhodes stopped and did me good-by the night he was killed; he said he was going to the swamp; they brought him back and tied him to a horse's tail; he was groaning; the moon was shining and I could see him plainly; my husband was in a corn field near by and he came out next day, and then went to Monroe and waited until I came; they hunted for him three days and nights after he left; the blacks in my neighborhood were Republicans, but were afraid to vote that ticket because the Democrats were armed and around the polls; the whites hunted for Jim Thomasson and others; Keobold said, as we were going to the Republican meeting, that he would cripple every male child in the parish if they did not carry the parish; Abram Williams, my father-in-law, living near me, was whipped and beaten the same night I was whipped; I saw him next morning lying in his bed all bloody; the men who whipped me said they wanted my husband because he would not go to their club.

A SUB-COMMITTEE TO THE RED RIVER COUNTRY.

GALVESTON, Tex., Dec. 20.—The House Sub-Committee on Louisiana Affairs, consisting of Congressmen Meade, Danford, and House, arrived here this morning en route for the upper Red River parishes. They will be absent about ten days.

SOUTH CAROLINA.

HAMPTON'S PLAN OF INTIMIDATION.

WHAT A MAN SAYS WHO KNOWS—CONGRESSMAN RAINEY'S STATEMENT.

[FROM THE REGULAR CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.]

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—Congressman Rainey of South Carolina, who is probably the best educated and most conservative of the colored representatives that have come up from the South since reconstruction, defends the rightfulness of the action of the Board of Canvassers of that State in throwing out the returns from the counties of Edgefield and Laurens. He says that it will stand any amount of investigation. The proof is ample, he asserts, that Georgians crossed the Savannah River in great numbers and voted at various polls, going from one to the other upon horseback. Wholesale repeating was also done, he alleges, by the white citizens in many counties, and especially in Edgefield, Laurens, Abbeville, and Aiken; the number of votes thrown in the rejected counties, in comparison with the census taken by the State authorities in 1875, is proof positive of enormous frauds, and the changing of heavy Republican majorities into overwhelming Democratic majorities is *prima facie* evidence on which side the frauds were committed.

Mr. Rainey says that the plan of Hampton's campaign, as taught the white leaders by emissaries from Mississippi, was to begin by massacres in strong negro counties, to intimidate the colored voters thoroughly. He thinks that the Hamburg massacre and the wholesale hunting and murder of colored men in Aiken and Barnwell counties were a part of the programme, and that it would have been carried out to a much greater extent had it not been for the courage and decision of United States District-Attorney Corbett, who proceeded immediately after the Ellenton affair to make arrests of prominent citizens. Afterward the Democratic method was to patrol the country with bodies of mounted men, armed with sabers, revolvers, and carbines, in order to overawe and intimidate the Republicans. Another and equally effective part of the scheme was for the white land-owners to notify their colored tenants that they must leave their homes immediately if they did not vote the Democratic ticket. The poor colored men, having nothing in the world except the cabins they lived in, and their little crops not yet ready to gather, were in very many cases thus forced to vote for a party which they abhorred. Mr. Rainey tells one instance of a man whom he knew, who voted the Democratic ticket with tears in his eyes, and said afterward that he bought the little piece of land of a white man, made $100 payment upon it, that his crop was in possession of the same person, and that he had been threatened with the loss of all he had in case he acted with the Republicans. He had no money to go to law, and knew that he would have no redress in case the threat was carried out. Mr. Rainey believes that the difficulty at Columbia will soon be peaceably settled. The State Senate, he is sure, will stand by Chamberlain, and Hampton will not be able to exercise any of the powers of government. He thinks that the purpose of Wade Hampton and the Democratic seceders from the House is to hold on and make a show of running the Government until after the 4th of March, when, if Tilden should get the Presidency, they would be sure of his support in overturning the lawful authorities.

THE TAX LEVY.

THE BILL BEING PUT ALONG IN THE LEGISLATURE—THE DEMOCRATS WANT TAXES PAID TO HAMPTON.

COLUMBIA, S. C., Dec. 20.—The Senate today decided by a strict party vote to adjourn with the Republican House sine die on the 22d inst. Their tax and appropriation bills passed a second reading in the Senate. The tax levy aggregate $17,000,000, exclusive of local taxes, and is equal to $2,010,000. Resolutions were passed by the Democratic House to-day instructing Gov. Hampton to issue a proclamation, calling upon the citizens to pay to such persons as he may designate 25 per cent of the State and county tax for the last fiscal year, and the persons paying such tax shall receive certificates receivable for taxes hereafter.

SYMPATHY FROM VIRGINIA.

RICHMOND, Dec. 20.—In the Senate to-day Senator Johnson's resolutions condemning Federal interference in the affairs of South Carolina, and expressing Virginia's sympathy for the people of that State, were further discussed, and an amendment was inserted calling on South Carolinians to continue in their forbearance, &c., after which the resolutions were adopted by a vote of 31 to 4, the negative votes being cast by Republicans.

FLORIDA.

PROGRESS OF THE INVESTIGATIONS.

HOUSE COMMITTEE SCATTERING.

TALLAHASSEE, Fla., Dec. 20.—The House principal committee left to-night for Live Oak, where it will be met by witnesses from Jasper Precinct in Hamilton County. It will go thence to Jacksonville, where the Duval and Alachua witnesses are awaiting them. The investigation will be closed there. It is probable that the final report will be made by the 1st of January. The sub-committee will proceed to Jackson County and canvass that county.

The Senate Committee still holds secret sessions, and spent the day in examining witnesses from Monroe, Manatee, and Jackson. The Supreme Court did not render a decision to-night, but adjourned till 10 o'clock to-morrow, when the decision is looked for. The Senate Committee called on the Secretary of State to-day for a tabulated statement of the vote for Presidential electors on the face of the returns, which was furnished, figuring up—Hayes, 24,370; Tilden, 24,312. This includes the return No. 1 from Baker County, which was, by the unanimous action of the board, rejected, and the other return substituted, which gives Tilden a majority of 119.

ROUGH WEATHER AT SEA.

THE CITY OF BRISTOL FORCED TO RETURN.

ROUGH WEATHER EXPERIENCED—THE SECOND OFFICER AND FOUR SEAMEN WASHED OVERBOARD AND DROWNED.

A press dispatch yesterday announced that the steamer City of Bristol, Capt. Ellison, which left Liverpool Dec. 6 for Philadelphia, had put back to Queenstown. She lost her foremast and bowsprit and all attached during a north-west gale. At noon on the 14th inst. the second officer and four seamen were washed overboard and drowned. Further particulars of this mishap were also received by telegraph yesterday. The City of Bristol, Capt. Ellison, sailed from Liverpool on the 6th at 3 in the afternoon, and called next day at Queenstown. During the greater part of the voyage rough weather was experienced. The deck was constantly swept by heavy seas, and the deck saloons were stove in. Several of the boats were damaged and some sails were lost. On the 14th, when the steamer had been eight days out, the second officer, who was noted for his gallantry and efficiency, was washed overboard and drowned. Four of the crew also suffered the same fate. The passengers are to be transferred to the steamer Illinois of the American line, which is to leave Queenstown to-day. The City of Bristol, formerly the Etna, is 3,010 tons burden, and was built at Greenock, Scotland. She belongs to the Inman line, but has for some time past been chartered by the American line.

THE RHEIN'S TEMPESTUOUS VOYAGE.

The North German Lloyd steamship Rhein, Capt. H. C. Francke, which arrived at this port yesterday, after a voyage of 15 days from Southampton, encountered the most continuous bad weather of which the officers had any experience. The Rhein left Bremen on Saturday, Dec. 2, and on her voyage through the North Sea and the English Channel felt some of the effects of the great gale of Dec. 2—4, which did so much damage all along the English coasts. After the usual delay of 36 hours at Southampton, she sailed from that port on Tuesday afternoon, Dec. 5. Very rough seas and head winds were encountered from the start, and the ship was 12 hours longer than usual in getting out of the Channel. On Friday morning, the 8th, a fresh gale set in from the south. The wind soon veered to the westward, and from that time until yesterday morning the vessel battled with an almost uninterrupted succession of westerly gales and violent head seas. One of the passengers on that Friday was tossed clean over the breakfast table, from one side of the saloon to the other, but fortunately was not injured. On the 13th, a more severe storm than any that had yet been felt sprang up and soon rose to a genuine hurricane. The ship was hove to all night. On Saturday, the 16th, the officers were able to get an observation for the first time in 10 days. Another westerly gale was encountered on Sunday and still another on Tuesday. Notwithstanding the terrible weather and the almost unexampled violence of the sea, the Rhein, thanks to careful and adroit handling, sustained no damage of any sort, has no accidents to report, and kept her saloons and cabins entirely dry.

INCOMBUSTIBLE SCENERY TESTED.

FURTHER SUCCESSFUL EXPERIMENTS AT WALLACK'S THEATER.

By invitation of J. Lester Wallack a number of gentlemen witnessed at Wallack's Theater yesterday afternoon further experiments by Dion Boucicault with his incombustible scenery. There were present President Perley and Commissioners King and Hatch of the Fire Department, Superintendent Adams of the Department of Buildings, Gen. Shaler, and a number of gentlemen connected with theaters, among them J. H. McVicker, A. M. Palmer, Joseph H. Tooker, and Messrs. Birch and Wambold. A large piece of canvas had been prepared, and, in the presence of the spectators, a jet of gas several feet long was directed upon it through a blowpipe nozzle. The canvas not only did not ignite, but for a considerable time no effect whatever was produced, except that it became somewhat black with the smoke. At length the material having become thoroughly charred, Mr. Boucicault punched a hole through it with the gas nozzle, but the edges did not kindle in the least degree, an indication that the solution had entirely permeated the texture. Similar experiments were made with ropes and wood washed with the solution, but they could not be made to ignite. The flame directed upon them was thought to be 100 times more powerful than any flame which could possibly come in contact with any stage scenery. The Fire Commissioners present expressed their perfect satisfaction with the thoroughness and success of the test, and thought that scenery thus prepared would render conflagrations within theaters impossible.

ORIENTAL AFFAIRS.

THE SITUATION BECOMING CLEARER.

ENGLAND'S COURSE STILL UNDECIDED—THE SWISS REFUSE TO OCCUPY BULGARIA—COUNT VON MOLTKE'S FOREBODINGS—ACCIDENT ON AN AUSTRIAN MONITOR.

ST. PETERSBURG, Wednesday, Dec. 20, 1876.

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