THE NEW-YORK HERALD.

WHOLE NO. 8892. SUNDAY MORNING, JANUARY 13, 1861. PRICE TWO CENTS.

THE CRISIS.

THE VERY LATEST NEWS.

Arrival of the Brooklyn at Charleston.

HER MISSION ONE OF PEACE.

Important Government Despatches to Governor Pickens and Major Anderson.

Reported Negotiations for the Surrender of Fort Sumter.

Messengers Sent to Washington by Major Anderson and South Carolina.

Rejoicings of the Secessionists in Mobile.

THE RETURN OF THE STAR OF THE WEST.

CAPTAIN M'GOWAN'S REPORT.

THREE SHOTS HIT THE STEAMER.

NO LIVES LOST.

Particulars of the Seizure of the Steamer Marion.

Senator Seward's Speech on the Crisis.

Opposition to the Army and Navy Appropriation Bills in the House,

&c., &c., &c.

IMPORTANT FROM WASHINGTON.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 12, 1861.

I learn that despatches have been sent from here by authority to Major Anderson, at Fort Sumter, and also to Governor Pickens, of South Carolina, informing them that the steam frigate Brooklyn was not ordered to Charleston for any hostile purpose. Her mission was one of peace.

The Hon. Jefferson Davis has also communicated similar intelligence, the object of which is to disabuse the minds of the people of that State, and to prevent a collision.

The United States steam sloop-of-war Brooklyn left the Navy Yard, at Norfolk, on the 9th inst., and proceeded immediately to sea, with sealed orders. She passed the Capes at half-past two o'clock P. M. The sloop was met by the mail steamer Jamestown, of the New York and Virginia steamship line, bearing away to sea, and only six miles inside of the Capes. The following is a list of her officers:—

Captain—W. S. Walker.
Lieutenants—Washington Gwathmey, Albert W. Smith, Wm. Mitchell, R. T. Chapman, H. A. Adams.
Master—Thos. B. Mills.
Surgeon—Jas. M. McClellan.
Assistant Surgeon—T. W. Leach.
Paymaster—Thos. H. Looker.
Lieutenant Marines—G. R. Graham.
Chief Engineer—Jas. Fallansbee.
1st Assistant Engineer—W. B. Brooks.
2d " " —M. P. Jordan.
2d " " —J. W. Whitaker.
3d " " —H. Snyder.
3d " " —G. F. Mayer.
3d " " —J. E. Neale.
Paymaster's Clerk—Parker.
Boatswain—J. K. Bartlett.
Gunner—Wm. Allen.
Carpenter—Jos. K. Smith.
Sail Maker—Francis Boom.

The United States ship Brooklyn, having finished coaling and taking in stores at the Navy Yard, agreeably to the orders received a few days ago from Washington, dropped down on Wednesday forenoon, under steam, to Hampton Roads, and proceeded immediately to sea. We learn that Lieut. Chapman and Master Mills, who were said to have resigned their commissions, are still on duty as officers of the Brooklyn.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 12, 1861.

The announcement this morning of the arrival of the Star of the West at New York greatly relieved the public mind, for there began to be fearful apprehensions entertained that the firing into her might have crippled her to such an extent that she was unable to return, and was possibly lost.

There was a Cabinet meeting last night till a late hour, on the despatches brought by Lieut. Talbot from Major Anderson. There is no reason to believe that anything further will be yielded to South Carolina.

The government have come to no decision in regard to the instructions to Major Anderson. The policy to be pursued respecting reinforcements is one which the administration cannot back down from without being humiliated in the eyes of the whole world. But when the fact is known that Major Anderson, before the order for reinforcements was given, and even since, has notified the government that he does not require any more force or supplies, it somewhat changes the aspect of affairs. What, however, the government may consider its duty under the circumstances I know not. The question is a delicate one, and upon it hinges in a great measure the future peace of the country.

It is believed Major Anderson's position is such, if South Carolina will furnish him with fresh supplies, he will not call for reinforcements. This may have been the occasion of the interview between the South Carolina authorities and Major Anderson, under the flag of truce before mentioned.

Despatches from Charleston ask for information respecting a rumor there that the Star of the West was to be ordered back from New York. They appeal to prominent parties here to see the President and implore him to revoke the order if given, for the steamer would undoubtedly be sunk by the South Carolina forces if she attempted to enter the harbor. No such order having been given by the President, the alarm in Charleston is therefore groundless.

As I anticipated, Mr. Seward's speech is denounced by both extremes, which, however, is looked upon as a good indication. Mr. Douglas regards it as a great speech, provided he understands its objects and purposes. If it is his ultimatum, then it will not answer; but if it is an entering wedge, or basis of settlement, much good will result from it. The South regard it as meaning coercion. In this view they are in error. His friends assert that he is opposed to coercion. Had he made the speech two weeks ago it would have accomplished its object.

In all circles there is a gloomy impression, as if nothing now remained for the Union but a bold, prompt declaration of principles by the President elect.

All accounts from the interior of Georgia are irrevocably secession, looking to no possible compromise.

The difficulty between General Scott and Senator Toombs is not yet settled, although it is in the hands of discreet friends.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 12, 1861.

The Senate presented an intensely interesting scene to-day. Previous notice having been given that Mr. Seward would speak upon the national crisis, an early rush was made to the Senate Chamber for seats. Ordinarily Mr. Seward attracts a crowd when it is known that he is to speak. Added to his Senatorial reputation on this occasion were two facts which increased the interest in what he might say. First, his acceptance of the Premiership in Mr. Lincoln's Cabinet; and second, the announcement, in view of his future position, that he would foreshadow the policy of the Lincoln administration.

As early as ten o'clock, two hours before the Senate and nearly three hours before Mr. Seward commenced, the ladies' gallery was crowded, and by eleven o'clock all the galleries and lobbies about the Senate were packed with an anxious multitude, and the very floor of the Senate was invaded. So offensive to the Senators was the presence of ladies upon the floor of the Senate and in the lobbies thereof, that a vote of the body caused them to be expelled.

At the hour of twelve the approaches to the Senate chamber were almost blockaded with human beings, all anxious to hear Mr. Seward, and all disappointed. The result of this was the filling of the spacious galleries of the House with a fashionable audience to witness the withdrawal of the Mississippi members and the passage of the Navy Appropriation bill.

Mr. Seward commenced at twenty minutes to one o'clock, and spoke until nearly three. He was listened to by nearly every Southern Senator with profound attention, Mr. Crittenden being frequently in tears, and most of the foreign Ministers were present and appeared deeply interested, not only in the delivery of the speech, but in several instances were anxious, after Mr. Seward concluded, to know of Senators how they viewed his positions, and if they would probably heal the difficulty. The Russian Minister was among the number. The families of nearly all the Senators and Cabinet officers were present, and so great was the anxiety to hear the effort of the great New York statesman, that extravagant prices were offered to the various doorkeepers to obtain admission.

All who heard the speech, of whatever shade of politics, pronounce it a great production. Southern politicians of the Wigfall school ridicule its doctrine. Northern extreme radical anti-slavery men consider it a letting down on the part of Mr. Seward. Senator Wade, alluding to it, exclaimed, "Great was the fall thereof." Mr. Crittenden thinks the speech is very good as far as it goes, but that it is not pacific enough to meet the demands of the times; but he (Mr. Crittenden) expresses the opinion that it will do very well for Mr. Seward's first step towards reconciliation. Senators Dixon, of Connecticut; Baker, of Oregon; Grimes, of Iowa, and Anthony, of Rhode Island, were the only Senators who went to Mr. Seward and congratulated him when he concluded. The Southern Senators hesitated to approach Mr. Seward and speak to him under such circumstances, fearing the fact might be misinterpreted. All the republican Senators, except those named above, assembled in knots of two, three and four and commenced discussing the doctrines announced.

It has been charged in republican circles that Mr. Seward was the author of the Robinson proposition introduced into the New York Assembly, and that he advised Mr. Adams to present his proposition in the Committee of Thirty-three in favor of admitting New Mexico as a State, with or without slavery. To-day Mr. Seward announced that he could not support Mr. Adams's proposition, introduced into the Senate some days since, which is the same as Robinson's. His reasons are well explained in his speech. It is believed now that these propositions by Mr. Robinson in New York, and Mr. Adams in the Committee of Thirty-three, were put forward as feelers. It will be observed that Mr. Seward does not propose to bring forward any measure of conciliation himself. He only tells the Senate and the country what propositions he would be willing to vote for should they be presented to him.

The general interpretation of Mr. Seward's speech is, that if not an abandonment of republican principles, it is altogether too temporizing in the face of treason. It is taken as a record for the forthcoming Lincoln administration. Mr. Seward being about to enter the new Cabinet, and believing that the existing state of affairs can but result in war, he determined to offer, in behalf of the republican party of the country, a liberal proposition to the South, and in doing so to yield as much as principle and conscience would allow without humiliating the North or infringing upon the principles of the Chicago platform. He thinks he has done neither of these. The effect of the speech of Mr. Seward upon all who listened to it was marked. Some of his periods were delivered with the deepest feeling, and produced upon Senators and the spectators in the galleries the most intense sympathies with the orator. Old men and young wept like children, and when Mr. Seward sat down, the galleries, that had preserved the most profound silence during the delivery of the entire speech, with one unimportant exception, manifested its approbation by the most hearty applause.

J. C. Brancroft Davis, correspondent of the London *Times*, arrived here this morning, and listened with great attention to Mr. Seward's speech.

Lieut. Talbot, despatched here by Major Anderson from Fort Sumter, is stopping at the residence of his mother, on English Hill. He is awaiting orders, and has no idea at what moment he will be ordered to return to Fort Sumter with despatches from the government. He reasserts the fact that Major Anderson is not in want of more men or provisions.

Secretary of the Treasury Dix will not enter upon his office till early next week, having previously to arrange some business in New York.

Mr. Bedford Brown, of North Carolina, has been written to by the President, and is expected here to-morrow. It is understood he will be tendered the Interior Department. His friends here do not believe he will accept the position. The Southern members will use all their efforts to persuade Southern men not to accept any position under the present administration.

R. M. Blatchford, of New York, is here, selecting a place under the new administration.

A caucus of Southern democratic Senators was held at Governor Brown's, of Mississippi, room at the National to-night. Among those present were Vice President Breckinridge, Senators Mason and Hunter of Virginia; Wigfall, of Texas; Brown, of Mississippi, and others. The nature fo the business had not transpired at a late hour.

The republicans are caucusing to-night, and Mr. Etheridge was invited to attend and present his views explanatory of his resolutions offered in the House some days since.

A gentleman here well posted in the matter has written an address to the people of Pike's Peak, advising them to abandon all hope of a Territorial government this session, and to prepare for taking part in a national convention, after dissolution, for the purpose of the formation of a confederacy on a new basis.

It is believed that the bill introduced in the Legislature of Missouri, prohibiting the Mayor or Sheriff of St. Louis from using a military force to suppress riot, looked to the seizure of the public property, and hence troops have been ordered thither.

The name of the Hon. John T. Harris, of Virginia, should have been added to those who had not signed the address to the Virginia Legislature favoring secession. Mr. Harris is a strong Unionist. Accounts from the interior of Virginia, received here to-day, are more favorable to conciliation.

THE REPUBLICAN MEETING AT NEWARK.

NEWARK, Jan. 12, 1861.

The republican meeting held here last evening adopted resolutions against any compromise; re-endorsing the republican platform, in favor of sustaining the constitution and enforcing the laws, and approving Major Anderson's course.

IMPORTANT FROM SOUTH CAROLINA.

REPORTED NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE SURRENDER OF FORT SUMTER.

The South Carolina Secretaries of War and State went yesterday to Fort Sumter under a flag truce. There is great excitement, and all sorts of rumors are afloat as to their object, but nothing certain is publicly known. The Secretaries remained two hours at Fort Sumter. It is believed the visit was not hostile.

Mr. Gourdin, a member of the South Carolina Convention, went to Fort Sumter this morning and held a private parley with Major Anderson.

All kinds of rumors prevail as to the cause of the sending of the flag of truce by South Carolina last night. Some say that disaffection exists among Major Anderson's men, and others that a surrender of the fort is contemplated and that it will be evacuated.

It is believed that negotiations with Washington are going on for a peaceful surrender of the fort and for the cessation of a warlike attitude.

Good authority credits this opinion.

ARRIVAL OF THE BROOKLYN OFF CHARLESTON.

CHARLESTON, Jan. 12, 1861.

The steamboat Excel has come into port with the news that the sloop-of-war Brooklyn is off the bar. This is certain.

Col. Hayne, on the part of South Carolina, and Lieutenant Hall, on the part of Major Anderson, have left for Washington with proposals, and to obtain further instructions.

THE MISSISSIPPI STATE CONVENTION.

JACKSON, January 12, 1861.

The Commissioner from Alabama addressed the Convention to-day.

The Convention will probably be in session two weeks longer.

Nothing of importance was done to-day.

The artillery were ordered to Vicksburg by the Governor early this morning to hail and question passing boats.

A salute of fifteen guns was fired last night on the reception of the news from Alabama and Florida. There is great excitement.

THE SIGNING OF THE FLORIDA SECESSION ORDINANCE.

TALLAHASSEE, Jan. 11, 1861.

The ordinance of secession was signed to-day in the eastern portion of the Capitol, amid the firing of cannon and the cheers and enthusiasm of the people.

Hon. T. Butler King, of Georgia, made a speech on the occasion, which was loudly cheered.

CALL FOR A STATE CONVENTION IN TENNESSEE.

NASHVILLE, Jan. 12, 1861.

The House to-day unanimously passed the bill calling a State Convention on the 18th of February. Delegates are to be elected on the 9th of February, and if the Convention resolves to withdraw from the Union, then its action is to be submitted to the people for ratification or rejection.

The same bill passed a second reading in the Senate, and will undoubtedly pass the third reading on Monday.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE.

RICHMOND, Va., Jan. 12, 1861.

The bill before the Legislature requires that a vote shall be taken at the time of the election of delegates to the Convention to determine whether the action of the Convention shall be submitted to the people or not. It also provides that the election shall be held on the 4th of February, and the State Convention held on the 18th of the same month.

The House has passed the Convention bill, with the amendment to refer the action of the Convention relative to secession back to the people.

No action has yet been taken on the bill by the Senate.

There is increased excitement at the Capitol to-day.

REJOICINGS OF THE ALABAMA SECESSIONISTS.

MOBILE, Jan. 12, 1861.

The secession of the State has caused great rejoicing here.

One hundred guns are being fired in honor of the event.

Impromptu speeches are being made in all the prominent buildings.

To-night the city will be illuminated and there will be a military parade.

One hundred thousand dollars have been subscribed by the citizens for the defence of Mobile.

THE BANQUET TO GOV. FLOYD, OF VIRGINIA.

RICHMOND, Jan. 12, 1861.

The banquet to Governor Floyd took place last night.

Governor Floyd made a speech, and related the conversations he had with the President, showing a breach of faith on the part of the latter, leading to his (Governor Floyd's) resignation.

Governor Floyd counselled resistance to federal coercion.

Secession speeches were then made by Lieutenant Governor Montague, Attorney General Tucker, James A. Seddon and others. The temporizing policy of the Legislature was severely commented upon.

Great enthusiasm prevailed.

THE KANSAS LEGISLATURE.

LEAVENWORTH, Jan. 12, 1861.

The message of acting Governor Beebe to the Territorial Legislature is mainly devoted to local affairs. The financial condition of the Territory is discouraging, owing in part to the disastrous effect of the drought. The total number of acres subject to taxation is 3,900,000; the total number of town lots, 135,328, valued at $5,640,000; total amount of taxable property in the Territory, $22,000,000. The total amount of taxes levied in 1859 and 1860 is $81,000, about $23,000 levied prior to 1859 remain unpaid. He recommends township, county and municipal organizations from the mineral regions of Western Kansas. In relation to the late disturbances in Linn and Bourbon counties he urges that steps be taken for the enforcement of the laws and vindication of the government. He recommends an expression of gratitude by the Legislature to the charitable who gave relief to the sufferers from the drought. He urges the repeal of the act of the last session prohibiting slavery, on the ground of its unconstitutionality. In regard to national affairs, he thinks the present distracted state of the country is owing to the aggressive policy of the republicans. He urges conciliation and Union; but if dissolution takes place he trusts Kansas will decline identifying herself with either branch of the Union, but establish a separate and independent government.

MOVEMENTS OF GEORGIA TROOPS.

Major F. W. Capers, Superintendent of the Georgia Military Academy, has been elected captain of a cavalry corps lately organized in Marietta, Ga., and called the "Kennesaw Dragoons."

Capt. W. L. Mugil, commandant of the Military Academy, is first lieutenant.

THE CRUISE OF THE STAR OF THE WEST.

The steamer Star of the West, the focus of excitement for the last few days, arrived at this city at eight o'clock yesterday morning, and anchored off pier No. 29 North river.

The Star of the West, under command of Captain McGowan, left New York on Saturday night last, and at one o'clock Wednesday morning made Charleston bar. Capt. McGowan says that they laid off the bar until daylight, when she proceeded to enter the harbor. When just off Morris Island the steamer was fired into by the battery from the island. Seventeen shots were fired. One shot took slight effect upon the port bow of the steamer, and a second hit her on the starboard quarter as she turned to leave the harbor. One ball passed between the smoke stack and the engine beam.

Finding it impossible to land troops, the captain, at nine A. M., returned to sea, the firing being still continued, but without further damage either to the vessel or those on board.

While coming over the bar, going out, the steamer struck twice.

The Star of the West remained outside the bar all night (Wednesday), and during the night steamers were seen coming out of the harbor, and Captain McGowan supposed that these vessels—the guard boats of the harbor—were in pursuit of him. All the lights on the Star of the West were extinguished, and she was not discovered.

The same night the ship Emily St. Pierre was spoken by the steamer. The St. Pierre is owned in Charleston, and came from Liverpool to that port, but was refused admittance because she had the American flag flying. The captain of the St. Pierre had not anticipated any such difficulty, and lay at anchor off the harbor.

The Star of the West made the passage to New York without incident, arriving here as above mentioned. The United States troops will remain on board until orders are received from Washington.

The steamer lies at anchor at the foot of Chambers street, and will doubtless attract as much attention as did the Great Eastern.

CAPTAIN McGOWAN'S REPORT.

STEAMSHIP STAR OF THE WEST, NEW YORK, Jan. 12, 1861.

M. O. ROBERTS, ESQ.:—

SIR—After leaving the wharf on the 5th inst., at five P. M., we proceeded on down the bay, where we hove to and took on board four officers and two hundred soldiers, with their arms, ammunition, &c., and then proceeded to sea, crossing the bar at Sandy Hook at nine P. M. Nothing unusual took place during the passage, which was a pleasant one for this season of the year.

We arrived off Charleston bar at half-past one A. M. on the 9th, but could find no guiding marks for the bar, as the lights were all out. We proceeded with caution, running very slow and sounding until about four A. M., being then in four and a half fathoms of water, when we discovered a light through the haze which at that time covered the horizon. Concluding that the light was on Fort Sumter, after getting the bearings of it we stood to the S.W. for the main ship channel, where we hove to to await daylight, our lights having been all put out since twelve o'clock, to avoid being seen. As the day began to break we discovered a steamer just in shore of us, who, as soon as she saw us, burned one blue light and two red lights as signals, and shortly after steamed over the bar and into the ship channel.

The soldiers were now all put below, and no one allowed on the deck except our own crew. As soon as there was light enough to see we crossed the bar and proceeded on up the channel (the outer bar buoy having been taken away), the steamer ahead of us sending off rockets and burning lights until after broad daylight, continuing on her course up near two miles ahead of us. When we arrived at about two miles from Fort Moultrie, Fort Sumter being about the same distance, a masked battery on Morris Island, where there was a red Palmetto flag flying, opened fire upon us, the distance being about five-eighths of a mile. We had the American flag flying at our flagstaff at the time, and soon after the first shot hoisted a large American ensign at the fore. We continued on under the fire of the battery for over ten minutes, several of the shot going clear over us; one just passed clear of the pilot house, another passed between the smoke stack and the walking beam of the engine; another struck the ship just abaft the fore rigging and stove in the planking; another shot came within an ace of carrying away the rudder. At the same time there was a movement of two steamers from near Fort Moultrie, one of them towing a schooner (I presume an armed schooner), with the intention of cutting us off. Our position now became rather critical, as we had to approach Fort Moultrie to within three-quarters of a mile before we could keep away for Fort Sumter. A steamer approaching us with an armed schooner in tow, and the battery on the island firing at us all the time, and having no cannon to defend ourselves from the attacks of the vessels, we concluded that to avoid certain capture or destruction we would endeavor to get to sea. Consequently we wore round and stood down the channel, the battery firing upon us until their shot fell short; as it was now strong ebb tide, and the water having fallen some three feet, we proceeded with caution and crossed the bar safely at fifty minutes past eight A. M., and continued on our course for this port, where we arrived this (Saturday) morning, after a boisterous passage. A steamer from Charleston followed us for about three hours, watching our movements. In justice to the officers and crews of each department of the ship, I must add that their behavior while under the fire of the battery reflected great credit on them.

Mr. Brower, the New York pilot, was of very great assistance to me in helping to pilot the ship over Charleston bar and up and down the channel.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. McGOWAN, Captain.

ADDITIONAL PARTICULARS.

From information received from parties on board we learn that the movement of the Star of the West was expected to be strictly private, but as some of the New York papers had got wind of it and made the affair public, the mission has been defeated. We have also been informed that the general impression of the North respecting the easy access of Charleston harbor by vessels of large draught is erroneous, as only vessels of light draught could get within a distance to do service; also that those in charge of the batteries on Morris Island are by no means the inexperienced gunners that were supposed, which was plainly visible by their shot, which for a time flew very lively about the vessel—two of them took effect and one passed between the smoke stack and the engine beam. The general feeling among the troops and crew on board is in favor of being landed at Fort Sumter, and they are anxious to return with the proper means of offence and defence. The Star of the West upon leaving the harbor received several parting shots from the battery on Morris Island, which fell short, but were well directed. Upon crossing the bar she struck twice, but received no damage. At night, while lying off the bar, discovered two steamers in chase, but she having extinguished her lights, they were unable to find her. Deeming it not prudent to again attempt a landing of the troops, she left for New York for further orders, which will probably reach here to-day. The supposition on board is that they will return to Charleston.

THE SEIZURE OF THE STEAMER MARION AT CHARLESTON.

STATEMENT OF CAPTAIN WHITING.

The report which was circulated in this city on Friday last that Captain Whiting, of the steamer Marion, had left his vessel at Norfolk, and his non-arrival at this port, led to considerable apprehension as to his safety among his friends.

In consequence of this, a party of gentlemen from the office of Messrs. Spofford, Tileston & Co., corner of Morris street and Broadway, left this city for Jersey City at twelve o'clock on Friday night, and having arrived there chartered an engine and passenger car to convey them to New Brunswick. This action was taken in consequence of intelligence having been received to the effect that the captain of the steamer had stopped at that point to visit his wife, who was unwell. Immediately on their arrival at New Brunswick the gentlemen proceeded to the captain's residence, and had a lengthy interview with him. After remaining there about two hours they left again for Jersey City, where they arrived early yesterday morning.

The information supplied by Captain Whiting concerning the seizure of the Marion is very interesting. The steamer arrived outside of Charleston harbor at about five o'clock in the morning, and approached the shore through a dense fog. When the mist began to clear away the port lighthouse became visible, but no buoys were seen, as many of these had been removed by the action of the State authorities within the last few weeks. The steamer General Clinch, with an armed force, was soon after seen coming down the channel, and on reaching the outer buoy she hove to. The officers of the Marion hereupon concluded that she had come out to guide their vessel safely into port. On nearing, however, the General Clinch ran alongside, and inquired what steamer was in the offing. The captain of the Marion had not met or spoken any steamer, and therefore could not supply the desired information. The question was very likely prompted by the supposition that the Star of the West was coming up. The captains of both vessels then entered into a conversation concerning the removal of the buoys, the destruction of the beacons, and other cognate matters. While this colloquy was in progress the Marion struck on the North Breaker Shoal. Captain Whiting immediately turned his attention to the safety of his ship. After making such dispositions as he thought necessary under the circumstances, he called upon the commander of the General Clinch to aid him in relieving the ship by taking a hawser and towing her off the shoal. The Captain, however, only replied by turning his vessel seaward, leaving the Marion hard aground in a dangerous position and with a rapidly falling tide. The General Clinch again came alongside of the Marion, in about an hour afterwards, when Captain Whiting asked her captain why he had not warned him of his danger and thus prevented the grounding of his vessel. Captain Relyea replied that the State authorities had placed a pilot on board, and that it was none of his business.

The Marion remained hard aground all day, but the weather was fortunately very calm. At three o'clock P. M. the steamer Gordon arrived, and under the superintendence of Captain Lockwood, her commander, the Marion was extricated from her perilous position and enabled to reach her dock safely and uninjured in about an hour afterwards. A requisition was then made upon the captain for his vessel, [illegible] of the Charleston stockholders having been previously obtained. Strong assurances at the same time were given by Gov. Pickens that the owners should be amply reimbursed for any loss they might suffer, giving as a reason for his summary demands that the State had urgent need of the vessel, and that the welfare of the State justified the irregularity of the proceeding. The captain, under these circumstances, yielded up the Marion to the Charleston officials, but the Governor eventually reinstated the captain in possession of the vessel. The owners do not consider the affair in the light of a seizure, although neither the Charleston stockholders nor the company's agents in that port had any legal right to dispose of the Marion at any price. When Captain Whiting left the vessel was coaling, preparatory to a return to New York, and she is expected to arrive on Tuesday next.

From despatches received, Messrs. Spofford & Tileston judged it proper to detain the Columbia beyond her usual time of sailing. Their Charleston agents now assure them that the authorities will at present throw no obstacles in the way of usual trade, and the Columbia will therefore sail on Wednesday and the James Adger on Saturday—the company intending to despatch two vessels each week as usual.

MOVEMENTS OF UNITED STATES MARINES.

First Lieutenant A. J. Hays, United States marine corps, has been detached from the Washington Marine Barracks and ordered to the command of Fort McHenry. The strength of this fortification, which had been left almost defenceless, has been reinforced by marines taken from the Washington Marine Barracks, consisting of Lieutenants Telays and Howell, three sergeants, four corporals, two musicians and thirty privates. Captain A. S. Taylor, United States marine corps, lately detached from the Brooklyn Marine Barracks and ordered to Washington—which we mentioned a few days since—has been ordered to the command of Fort Washington, on the Potomac, vice Major George H. Territt, recalled to the command of the Washington Marine Barracks. The garrison of Fort Washington consists of one captain (Taylor), two lieutenants (Hebb and Nicholson), three sergeants, three corporals, two musicians and forty privates—all of the marine corps. The total force of marines stationed at Washington Navy Yard and garrison, exclusive of those on detached service, consists of 170 men, a few of which number are recruits.

MORE RESIGNATIONS FROM THE FEDERAL ARMY AND NAVY.

Major Earl Van Dorn, of the Second regiment of dragoons, of Mississippi, has tendered his resignation to the War Department. He graduated at West Point June 30, 1842; was appointed Brevet Second Lieutenant July 1, 1842; Second Lieutenant, November 30, 1844; First Lieutenant, March 3, 1847; Brevet Captain, April 18, 1847, for gallant and meritorious conduct in the battle of Cerro Gordo, Mexico; promoted Brevet Major in August, 1847, for gallant and meritorious conduct in the battles of Cherubusco and Contreras, Mexico; wounded in entering the city of Mexico, September 13, 1847; attached as aide-de-camp to Brevet Major General P. F. Smith, in 1848-9; he was secretary and treasurer of the Military Asylum, Pascagoula, Mississippi, from January, 1852, to January, 1855; promoted to full captaincy in March, 1855; distinguished himself while in command of an expedition against the Camanche Indians in Northern Texas, July 1, 1856; again in command of expedition against and in conflict with a large force of Camanche Indians near Witchita Village, Texas, Oct. 1, 1858, gaining a most decisive and important victory, leaving fifty-six Indians dead on the field, but was himself four times wounded, twice dangerously; and again was distinguished with a similar command in action with a body of Camanches strongly posted in the valley of Neecutunger, May 13, 1850, in which his command was completely victorious.

Major Van Dorn has reported himself to the Governor of Mississippi, declaring his willingness to cast his lot with his native State, deeming that his first and paramount allegiance is due to her. He has recently returned from Texas. Mississippi will welcome back with pride and affection a son so brave and so devoted, who has shed lustre on her name in so many situations of peril and so many fields of arduous service.

First Lieutenant J. H. Forney (of Alabama), Tenth infantry, has resigned his commission in the army.

Lieut. Thomas P. Pelot, of South Carolina, late of the United States sloop-of-war Savannah, has resigned his commission in the navy and tendered his services to the Governor of South Carolina. He entered the service June 23, 1849, and since that time has done three years' sea service.

IMPORTANT PROCEEDINGS IN CONGRESS.

THIRTY-SIXTH CONGRESS.
SECOND SESSION.

Senate.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 12, 1861.

The proceedings of the Senate were opened with prayer.

Mr. CAMERON, (rep.) of Pa., asked whether a vote could be taken to allow persons to the floor of the Senate.

Mr. TOOMBS, (opp.) of Ga., objected.

The PRESIDENT decided that the rule might be dispensed with by unanimous consent.

Further objection being made, a vast number of ladies and gentlemen returned to the lobby rooms.

The diplomatic corps were in attendance.

At least a thousand ladies and twelve hundred gentlemen are in the galleries, and it is impossible for any more to obtain admission.

A motion to fill the vacancy in the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institute was laid on the table.

Mr. GWIN, (opp.) of Cal., moved that the Senate proceed to the special order, the consideration of the President's Message. Agreed to.

MR. SEWARD'S SPEECH.

Mr. SEWARD, (rep.) of N. Y., took the floor, and said:—

Mr. PRESIDENT—Congress adjourned last summer amid auspices of national abundance, contentment, tranquillity and happiness. It was reassembled this winter in the presence of derangement of business and disturbance of public as well as private credit, and in the face of seditious combinations to overthrow the Union. The alarm is appalling; for Union is not more the body than liberty is the soul of the nation. The American citizen has been accustomed to believe the republic immortal. He shrinks from the sight of convulsions indicative of its sudden death. The report of our condition has gone over the seas, and we who have so long and with much complacency studied the endless agitations of society in the Old World, believing ourselves exempt from such disturbances, now, in our turn, seem to be falling into a momentous and disastrous revolution. I know how difficult it is to decide, amid so many and so different counsels, what ought to be and even what can be done. Certainly, however, it is time for every Senator to declare himself. I, therefore, following the example of the noble Senator from Tennessee (Mr. Johnson), avow my adherence to the Union in its integrity and with all its parts, with my friends, with my party, with my State, with my country, or without either, as they may determine, in every event, whether of peace or of war, with every consequence of honor or dishonor, of life or death. Although I lament the occasion, I hail with cheerfulness the duty of lifting up my voice, among distracted debates, for my whole country and its inestimable Union. Hitherto the exhibitions of spirit and resolution here, as elsewhere, have been chiefly made on the side of disunion. I do not regret this. Disunion is so unexpected and unnatural that it must plainly reveal itself before its presence can be realized. I like best, also, the courage that rises slowly under the pressure of severe provocation. If it be a Christian duty to forgive to the stranger even seventy times seven offences, it is the highest patriotism to endure without complaint the passionate waywardness of political brethren so long as there is hope that they may come to a better mind. I think it is easy to pronounce what measures or conduct will not save the Union. I agree with the honorable Senator from North Carolina (Mr. Clingman) that mere eulogiums will not save it. Yet I think that as prayer brings us nearer to God, though it cannot move Him toward us, so there is healing and saving virtue in every word of devotion to the Union that is spoken, and in every sigh that its danger draws forth. I know, at least, that, like virtue, it derives strength from every irreverent act that is committed and every blasphemous phrase that is uttered against it. The Union cannot be saved by mutual criminations concerning our respective share of responsibility for the present evils. He whose conscience acquits him will naturally be slow to accuse others whose co-operation he needs. History only can adjust the great account. A continuance of the debate on the constitutional power of Congress over the subject of slavery in the Territories will not save the Union. The opinions of parties and sections on that question have become dogmatical, and it is this circumstance that has produced the existing alienation. A truce, at least during the debate on the Union, is essential to reconciliation. The Union cannot be saved by proving that secession is illegal or unconstitutional. Persons bent on that fearful step will not stand long enough on forms of law to be dislodged, and loyal men do not need such narrow ground to stand upon. I fear that little more will be gained from discussing the right of the federal government to coerce seceding States into obedience. If disunion is to go on, this question will give place to the more practical one, whether many seceding States have a right to coerce the remaining members to acquiesce in a dissolution. I dread, as in my innermost soul I abhor, civil war. I do not know what the Union would be worth if saved by the use of the sword. Yet, for all this, I do not agree with those who, with a desire to avert that great calamity, advise a conventional or unopposed separation, with a view to what they call a reconstruction. It is enough for me, first, that in this plan destruction goes before reconstruction; and secondly, that the strength of the vase in which the hopes of the nation are held consists chiefly in its remaining unbroken. Congressional compromises are not likely to save the Union. I know, indeed, that tradition favors this form of remedy. But it is essential to its success, in any case, that there be found a preponderating mass of citizens so far neutral on the issue which separates parties that they can intervene, strike down clashing weapons and compel an accommodation. Moderate concessions are not customarily asked by a force with guns in battery; nor are liberal concessions apt to be given by an opposing force not less confident in its own right and its own strength. I think, also, that there is a prevailing conviction that legislative compromises which sacrifice honestly cherished principles, while they anticipate future exigencies, even if they do not assume extra constitutional powers, are less sure to avert imminent evils than they are certain to produce ultimately even greater dangers. Indeed, Mr. President, I think it will be wise to discard two prevalent ideas or prejudices, namely:—First, that the Union is to be saved by somebody in particular; and secondly, that it is to be saved by some cunning and insincere compact of pacification. If I remember rightly, I said something like this here so long ago as 1850, and afterwards in 1854. The present danger discloses itself in this form. Discontented citizens have obtained political power in certain States, and they are using this authority to overthrow the federal government. They delude themselves with a belief that the State power they have acquired enables them to discharge themselves of allegiance to the whole republic. The honorable Senator from Illinois (Mr. Douglas) says we have a right to coerce a State, but we cannot. The President says that no State has a right to secede, but we have no constitutional power to make war against a State. The dilemma results from an assumption that those who, in such a case, act against the federal government, act lawfully as a state; although manifestly they have perverted the power of the State to an unconstitutional purpose. A class of politicians in New England set up this theory and attempted to practise upon it in our war with Great Britain. Mr. Jefferson did not hesitate to say that States must be kept within their constitutional sphere by impulsion, if they could not be held there by attraction. Secession was then held to be inadmissible in the face of a public enemy. But if it is untenable in one case, it is necessarily so in all others. I fully admit the originality, the sovereignty and the independence of the several States within their sphere. But I hold the federal government to be equally original, sovereign and independent within its sphere. And the government of the State can no more absolve the people residing within its limits from allegiance to the Union than the government of the Union can absolve them from allegiance to the State. The constitution of the United States, and the laws made in pursuance thereof, are the supreme law of of the land, paramount to all legislation of the States, whether made under the constitution, or by even their organic conventions. The Union can be dissolved, not by secession, with or without armed force, but only by the voluntary consent of the people of the United States, collected in the manner prescribed by the constitution of the United States. Congress, in the present case, ought not to be impassive. It ought, if it can, to redress any real grievances of the offended States, and then it ought to supply the President with all the means necessary to maintain the Union in the full exhibition and discreet exercise of its authority. Beyond this, with the proper activity on the part of the Executive, the responsibility of saving the Union belongs to the people,

(CONTINUED ON EIGHTH PAGE.)