

WASHINGTON

Summer's Solemn Joke Over the Final Adjournment.

Wanted, \$250,000 for the Geneva Conference Expenses.

Another Tentative Debate Over the New Apportionment.

The Democratic Executive Convention and the Impeachment of President Grant.

Attorney General Akerman Said to Have Resigned Yesterday.

Proceedings of the Congressional Committees.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 12, 1871.

Reported Resignation of Attorney General Akerman.

It is understood that Attorney General Akerman resigned to-day; but his successor has not yet been appointed. It is generally believed that the place will be offered to ex-senator Williams, of Oregon, but a strong effort is making by some of the Southern Senators and Representatives to have Horace Maynard, of Tennessee, appointed. The South is anxious to have a representative in the Cabinet, and this is the secret of the slight movement in favor of Maynard; but still another movement was developed to-day, this being in favor of Solicitor General Bristow, who has been several Attorney General during Akerman's administration of the Department of Justice. General Bristow has many friends in both houses of Congress, and from thirty to forty of these, most of them from the South, have united in asking for his appointment. This, it is believed, entirely destroys Maynard's chances, and unless the President should persist in his policy of appointing somebody else, because somebody who had already been chosen, as the case of Williams before Akerman's appointment had been recommended to him, the nomination of General Bristow is certain.

Fun for Members Over the Question of Adjournment—The Impeachment Plans—Discussion on the Appropriation for the Geneva Conference.

Presidential gerrymandering continued in the Senate to-day; but, though it was understood that Senator Chandler had gone up to Capitol Hill as full of words on the great question of yesterday as Faust was of oaths, the opportunity which he courted was wanting. Mr. Trumbull's resolution for a Committee on Retrenchment did not come up again, and thus it was that the great speech of the administration's great champion was choked off. Instead of this, the Presidential thing was over. Mr. Morton's resolution for a final adjournment of Congress on the third Monday in May, Mr. Sumner created some merriment by moving that no adjournment shall take place till after the passage of a supplementary civil rights bill, and Mr. Schurz gave the fun a somewhat sordid character by adding that bills should be previously passed to reduce the tariff and internal revenue, and to reform the civil service. If the second session of the Forty-second Congress is really to be of any value to the country it can readily be seen that the amendments to the resolution are more important than the resolution itself, and this was the view which was taken by the resolutionist republicans. In the Senate Mr. Trumbull announced that he was in favor of all these things, but as it was impossible to pass all of them this morning he consumed time enough to say that any time occupied in discussing the resolution was being thrown away. But to throw away time was in reality the question before the Senate, as nobody proposes to think of anything but President-making from now till after the holidays. Accordingly the result of the day's work was nothing in itself, but it was important as showing the antagonisms the administration will be compelled to meet in the Senate. So eager were the democrats for the test of strength that, without exception, they voted for taking up the resolution, and the motion to table was only lost by 22 to 31. Sumner, Trumbull, Schurz and even Wilson voted to table the resolution, and it became more apparent than ever that the breach is widening, and that soon there is to be open and bitter war. The only difficulty now is as to the way of beginning the attack in earnest, and the skirmishing will go on till the way can be cleared for a general battle.

The silly people who would not believe there was any intention to impeach the President are having their eyes opened. General Butler, who is considered among the doubtful friends of General Grant, has been especially active in pointing out the scheme as absurd; but he is so universally regarded as one of the uncertain party so that nobody is sure which side he will take. The less knowing democrats took, or affected to take, the same view of it in the beginning, and even the journal in this city which calls itself the organ of the national democracy started out by denouncing the design as a dodge of political rogues. To-day, however, it changed its tone, and after smoothing its blunder as a disconcerting of "mere sensationalism" it asks—

What movement in good faith assailed for the recovery, for the Chief Magistracy, of its constitutional and traditional dignity, of which only the vestiges remain, by the displacement of Grant rather than by the removal of the President, by the election of a statesman to succeed him, who needs more than a suggestion to perceive the manifold accusations, any one of which, under the legal principle so strenuously denied against Andrew Johnson, that to impeach a President is to impeach a crime or misdemeanor at common law, or by statute, could be established against the present despicable successor of Jackson and of Washington?

This is followed by a recapitulation of the charges printed in the Herald, as those upon which the articles of impeachment are to be founded. The scheme continues to be discussed in all circles, but the premature publication of the design has compelled the Democratic Executive Committee to abandon its intention of holding a meeting to-night, and if the conference is held at all it will be with the utmost secrecy.

The galleries bloomed with female loveliness once again to-day. It is said that gay colors, ribbons, fans, jewels and bright faces often act as an inspiration to the sterner sex and have had great weight in deciding great questions of State. How much the presence of the ladies had to do with the excitement to-day over the bill reported by Mr. Banks, from the committee on Foreign Affairs, providing for an appropriation of \$25,000 to defray the expenses of the Geneva Conference, is not known, but great interest was manifested, and the discussion was generally participated in by the leading members of the House. Mr. Banks asked the House to make the appropriations at the present time, as the necessity for it was immediate and pressing, and allow the detailed discussion of the treaty to pass until after the holidays. Mr. Garfield opposed the passage of the bill, claiming that it should go to the committee on Appropriations. Mr. Dawes came to the rescue of the imperiled rights of Mr. Garfield's committee, for which he was warmly thanked. Mr. Banks claimed that the constitution provides that each house of Congress shall have the right to frame rules, etc., and the wise lawmakers did not, in this case, take any care to investigate that subject and have the rules changed. The committee of which Butler is chairman is framed especially to prevent such blunders, and ought to be held responsible. The committee on Rules will also report in favor of the District of Columbia Committee. When Mr. Chapman, the delegate, sought to avail himself of this privilege, it was found that he was debarred by rules of the House. Appealing to the law he learned that it was illegal in that particular, as the constitution provides that each house of Congress shall have the right to frame rules, etc., and the wise lawmakers did not, in this case, take any care to investigate that subject and have the rules changed. The committee of which Butler is chairman is framed especially to prevent such blunders, and ought to be held responsible. The committee on Rules will also report in favor of the District of Columbia Committee.

to the Committee on Appropriations as clearly Mr. Banks' favor. Considerable earnestness was displayed by members taking part in the discussion. Law Campbell, the well-known leader of the House in anti-bellum times, and the successor of General Schenck, sustained Mr. Garfield. The real cause of the interest displayed by members was due almost entirely to a feeling of opposition to the continued tendency displayed in the matter of centralizing all business of the House into the hands of three or four of its more important committees. Democratic members naturally, as being in the opposition, were most active in opposing the motion for reference.

This and the motion adopted yesterday directing an investigation into the affairs of the Treasury Department by a standing committee, long regarded as merely ornamental, seemed to be skirmishes prelude to a general engagement over this matter of absorbing all power into the Committee of Ways and Means, Judiciary and Appropriations. Mr. Wood, being on the committee, sustained its chairman, while Mr. Cox, wanting an opportunity to ventilate his opinions on international questions, moved its immediate reference to the Committee of the Whole. Messrs. Hale and Scofield sustained Mr. Garfield, the former being anxious to stand by his chairman. Mr. Banks held the galleries and commanded the attention of the House, as he always does when emergencies require the use of his reserved intellectual force. The matter was temporarily disposed of with the understanding that Mr. Banks would make the motion to go into the Committee of the Whole, to which the bill was to be referred at the earliest opportunity.

The House then went into the Committee of the Whole on the Apportionment bill. Mr. Maynard opening the debate with a strong argument in support of the leading features of his amendment. The question of the effect of the fourteenth amendment in excluding from the basis of representation persons disfranchised by reason of education or property tax, or religious qualifications, was fully discussed. Mr. Shellabarger urged his republican friends to stand by their own policy, no matter whom it hurt. He declared the amendment was designed for the protection of the poor and ignorant or those otherwise banned, and to insure that representation and the franchise should go hand in hand. Mr. Cox illustrated pungently the proverb of "chickens coming home to roost" by reference to Rhode Island and the effect on its representation of the peculiar electoral qualifications that exist there. Mr. Garfield spoke against the effect of the provisions of the fourteenth amendment as affecting representation, supporting Mr. Shellabarger's view. After the usual further consequent upon motion for the committee to rise the motion was carried, and the House adjourned in evident good humor over the result.

Republican Senators in Caucuses.

A republican Senate caucus convened this afternoon to consider Mr. Trumbull's resolution reviving the Joint Retrenchment Committee and enlarge its powers, and to consider the civil service organization also. The caucus was full, and it was in session for over two hours. Its proceedings were the liveliest character, filled with the sharpest personal debates, and the caucus adjourned without reaching any conclusion except that there was an aggressive conflict. In the republican party the discussion took a wide range, and was quite incisive and pointed in character. The question of reference to standing or select committees was referred to, and brought an attack on the committee system now prevailing. It was proposed to make an entire revision, to abolish a number of committees as useless, and at least one, which, it was broadly suggested, was only a nursery for jobs—that on the Pacific Railroad. The Revolutionary Claims and several others were mentioned as unnecessary. It appears that nearly all the committees have clerks whose duties are merely nominal and pay large. They are usually the private secretaries of the chairman. Mr. Trumbull's resolution appeared to excite great anger among the "thick and thin" administration Senators. Mr. Chandler led off in a furious onslaught on the work of the committees in previous Congresses, declaring their labors had been worthless, and were always a waste of time and money. The close of the meeting was manifested. Senator Schurz took no part in the wrangle, while Senator Sumner was not only silent, but left some time before the caucus adjourned. It will resemble to-morrow, and there seems a probability that a compromise will be adopted. If the understanding is reached that Mr. Schurz shall not be the chairman of such a committee, if it be raised, Senators who supported Trumbull as well as that gentleman urged that it was the duty of the republican party to head off in the work of retrenchment and purification. All who spoke declared themselves ardent supporters of party harmony, and only desired action that would benefit the party. There is little prospect of any joint committee being agreed to by the House, even if the Senate does agree, as by a resolution offered by Mr. Dawes to-day and passed without opposition. The several committees on expenditures of the various departments other than the Treasury, already acted on, are instructed to make just such investigations as Mr. Trumbull contemplates. Either this activity in the way of reform is really designed to accomplish the purpose or it is merely intended to close the mouths of the opposition.

Congressional Committees in Session.

A majority of the working committees met to-day to arrange for regular sessions. The tendency to concentration is more manifest every Congress. A comparatively few members, by reason of long service, are forced to do all the work. Mr. Starkweather, of Connecticut, for instance, is chairman of one important committee and second on another. General Butler is chairman of one, not as yet developed into active importance, and is also a member of two others of the most influential standing, and second on the Judiciary. These are illustrations of the tendency referred to. There were eight committee meetings this morning, besides that of the House on the part of the day. The Appropriations Committee met three times this week. Ways and Means and the others, so far, have named only one day. There are forty-two committees in all, of which number three are joint standing committees and three others are "special," one of the latter—that on the Insurrectionary States—being also a joint committee. Of the standing committees twenty-three have so far designated regular days of meeting. Several of these will have but little to do, while a majority of those remaining will not meet more than once in an session. Members who desire to prevent jobs and loose legislation deprecate the violation of the House rules by the failure of so many committees to do the work assigned to them and there is a growing desire to reform in this direction.

The Committee on Rules met to-day and considered the resolution of Mr. Chaffee to appoint on the Committee on Territories one of the delegates, and decided to report in its favor. Consideration of the matter brought out a curious blunder, which shows the necessity for such a vigilant committee as that of General Butler may make of the one on "Revision of the Laws." The law organizing a government for this District provided that the delegate in Congress allowed by it should be a member of the District of Columbia Committee. When Mr. Chapman, the delegate, sought to avail himself of this privilege, it was found that he was debarred by rules of the House. Appealing to the law he learned that it was illegal in that particular, as the constitution provides that each house of Congress shall have the right to frame rules, etc., and the wise lawmakers did not, in this case, take any care to investigate that subject and have the rules changed. The committee of which Butler is chairman is framed especially to prevent such blunders, and ought to be held responsible. The committee on Rules will also report in favor of the District of Columbia Committee.

delegate having a place in the District of Columbia Committee. General Butler has arranged to meet the Senate Committee on Revision of the Laws, and provide thereby for harmony of action in reporting the various titles sent in by the codifying commission.

The House Committee on Education and Labor, at their session to-day, considered bills introduced by Messrs. Shanks and Kellinger for the organization of a bureau of labor. They agreed to meet to-morrow and hear the gentlemen in support of their measures. The Ways and Means Committee were in session to-day and discussed the bill for the repeal of the income tax without coming to any conclusion. The complexion of the committee is quite mixed on this subject, but it is doubtful if the repeal will be reported in this case. Mr. Plinkenberg, of St. Louis, with the controlling majority, as Messrs. Dawes, Brooks, Keller and Maynard will probably go for repeal, and Messrs. Burdick, E. H. Roberts, Kerr and Beck against any change. The Post Office and Post Roads Committee met and organized this morning, and agreed to give the envelope manufacturers a hearing at their first session after the holidays. The Postmaster General will be invited to attend. The manufacturers complain that the department interferes with private enterprise by engaging in the manufacture and sale of stamped envelopes. Special Payments.

The House Committee on Banks and Currency to-day talked over the subject of the resumption of specie payments, and the committee will be appointed to consider the several propositions to that end; but it is not probable that definite action will be taken on the subject by the entire committee until after the holidays.

Investigation of the Expenditures of Public Departments.

Mr. Dawes, in the exercise of his office as leader of the House, put through a resolution to-day directing the tail-end committees to investigate the several executive departments. These committees on expenditures in the departments have never been used, and were never intended to be, and their composition and structure have always debarred them from claiming the right to be considered ornamental. But exigencies of politics have brought these Congressional hospitals into notice, and the heads of the departments now to be honored by their presence are busily engaged in learning something about them. Dawes' resolution is intended to be a two-edged sword, cutting at once at Senator Trumbull's scheme to revive the Committee on Retrenchment, and Congressman Lynch's rebellion against the exile, for which Mr. Blaine had consigned him; for it is feared that Lynch, by his ominous resolution of yesterday, has floated himself on the tide that, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune, which is just where Mr. Blaine does not want him to be. So far as relates to Mr. Trumbull's dig at the administration, it is probable enough that the action of the House to-day affords the Grant men in Congress their desired opportunity to smother it; but it is just as likely that the Dawes resolution will prove to be as dangerous as a boomerang hurled by unskilful hands.

To say nothing of dissatisfied republicans, there are straight-out democrats on each committee, and these are receiving the congratulations of their fellow politicians over the good time they are going to have, at the expense of the President's supporters, on the invitation of his own friends. Democratic Mr. McNeely, of Illinois, was chosen off under the rules in his attempt to bring out the facts of the financial irregularities of General Butler, Disbursing Officer of the Freedmen's Bureau, but Messrs. Kinsella and Acker, of the War Department Committee, will attend to the matter, and Fernando Wood, whose efforts to bring the transactions of the bureau into daylight were suppressed a year ago, has many useful points to devote to the service of the present opportunity. It is thought that if General Howard can be induced to defer the publication of his proposed history of this governmental Christian commission till the minority report of the Congressional Committee is printed, he can have the chance to give a fairer if not a fuller account of its operations than the public could otherwise expect.

The only trouble is said to be that the field of investigation is so extensive that it is equally perplexing to tell where to begin and where to stop. As Mr. Wood has remarked, the officials and the affairs of the Freedmen's Bureau and the Howard University are so mixed that it is impossible to tell "where from which," and the only thing at all certain is that the United States has furnished all the money. In the Interior Department Mr. Hill, of New Jersey, the Chairman of the Committee of Inquiry, is bound to make a rumpus. He has intimated that he is going right through it, Patent Office, Land Office, Indian Bureau and the rest. But the Pension Office is to come in for the largest share of attention. The officials of that office are already in a shaky condition, and if report be true, they will be. What the Post Office Committee will accomplish is more a matter of doubt than with any of the other committees. The chairman (Mr. Barry, of Miss.) is a carpet-bagger of no weight, and William R. Roberts, of New York, the strongest member, is cramped by his politics. It is certain that the Department is not afraid, as one of its leading officials, on being bantered about the overhauling he was soon to get, quietly observed that he had been lately investigating Mr. Barry himself, and that if the latter made himself offensive by his new-found consequence there was an official record or two in his military history conveniently at hand which, so far beneath his gaze, would become a powerful and effective weapon against the State Department.

Laws for Steamboat Owners.

The Executive Committee of the National Steamboatmen's Convention assembled this morning in this city, for the purpose of taking preliminary steps to revise the existing steamboat laws, which have proven so burdensome to the owners of all classes of steam vessels. The committee, of which Thomas Sherman, of Cincinnati, is chairman, and Captain R. S. Osborn, of New York, is secretary, met at eleven o'clock, and upon calling the roll it was ascertained that the following States were represented—Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Ohio, Indiana, Missouri, Louisiana, Kentucky, Michigan, New Jersey and Illinois.

Telegrams were read from members en route, which will increase the representation of States to twenty-four. The bill which was introduced yesterday in the House by General Jewett was presented to the committee for final endorsement; this bill being the one which was prepared by the subcommittee at its first meeting on the 21st ult., and which is held by the members of the committee have found that Congressmen favor the change, and say the law should govern their duties and provide for the safety of life and property entrusted to their care. There is no desire on the part of the committee to amend the existing one, but the existing one is considered by them so objectionable that they ask Congress to relieve them of its enactments. The committee assembled to-day for the purpose of revising the vessel code, and more than nine-tenths of the

entire steam tonnage of the United States. The committee adjourned to meet to-morrow morning.

Important Decisions by the Treasury.

The following are among the recent decisions of the Secretary of the Treasury:—Samples of new articles not exceeding \$100 in value, imported for the purpose of testing the market, are to be admitted to duty on the same basis as other goods. Without the execution of a bond to produce the invoice, Indian rubber cloth to pay a duty of thirty per cent. ad valorem. The duty on wool, when washed, paid on the same basis as other wool. Steels, in coils, to pay a duty of two and a quarter cents per pound, from the first class of wool, washed, paid on the same basis as other wool. Two per centum ad valorem. The duty of six dollars per pound on opium does not apply to any quantity of opium.

Nominations Confirmed by the Senate.

The Senate, in executive session, to-day confirmed the following nominations:—John W. Douglas to be Commissioner of Internal Revenue. Robert O. Hudson, for the First district of Oregon. Alexander N. Wilson, for the First district of Georgia. Messrs. of Internal Revenue—Sheila Waters, for the Third district of Michigan; Thomas B. Hoar, for the First district of Alabama; William L. Warren, for New Mexico; Caleb D. Lord, for the First district of Oregon; John C. Adams, of Alabama, for the District of Columbia; Charles E. Harrison, for the Sixth district of Ohio; Alvin B. Clark, for the First district of Ohio.

Collectors of Customs—Dunker A. Arthur, at New York; Pascal B. Klidder, Chester K. N. Y.; Thaddeus G. DeWitt, Nantucket, Mass.; H. W. Wilkinson, New York.

Miscellaneous.—Edward G. Bradford, United States Judge for the District of Delaware; George W. Brown, District Judge for the District of Florida; J. B. Brown, District Judge for the District of Pennsylvania; Minister Resident at Salvador; George C. Bowman, Examiner of claims for the Patent Office; Richard C. Shattuck, Secretary of Legation at Brazil; J. K. Darrah, Appraiser of Merchandise at Boston; J. H. Brewer, of Connecticut, District Attorney at Hartford; J. C. Adams, of Missouri; John E. Routh, of Illinois, to be Second Assistant Postmaster General.

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Miscellaneous.—Edward G. Bradford, United States Judge for the District of Delaware; George W. Brown, District Judge for the District of Florida; J. B. Brown, District Judge for the District of Pennsylvania; Minister Resident at Salvador; George C. Bowman, Examiner of claims for the Patent Office; Richard C. Shattuck, Secretary of Legation at Brazil; J. K. Darrah, Appraiser of Merchandise at Boston; J. H. Brewer, of Connecticut, District Attorney at Hartford; J. C. Adams, of Missouri; John E. Routh, of Illinois, to be Second Assistant Postmaster General.

Forty-Second Congress.

Second Session. SENATE. WASHINGTON, D. C., Dec. 12, 1871.

The Senate concurred in the House resolution to adjourn over from December 21 to January 8, 1872.

The following bills were introduced and referred:—

By Mr. WILSON, (rep. of Mass.)—To establish a marine registry of shipping, and to promote the interests of American commerce.

By Mr. WRIGHT, (rep. of Iowa)—Appropriating \$500,000 for the purpose of paying balances due, and to be found due under the act to indemnify the States for war expenditures.

By Mr. BINGHAM, (rep. of Conn.)—To fill the vacancy caused by Mr. Sumner's retirement from the chairmanship of the Committee on Privileges and Elections.

By Mr. MORTON, (rep. of Ind.) at his own request, was relieved from his position on the Committee on the Judiciary.

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ANOTHER BANK SUSPENSION.

Failure of the Ocean National Bank.

Stoppage of Payment at Noon Yesterday—Appointment of a Receiver—Prospects of the Stockholders and the Depositors—The United States Examiner's Checks on the Bank.

The rumor of the suspension of the Ocean National Bank caused considerable excitement yesterday morning throughout the city. Though the bank has not for some time had a very first class reputation, the report was not generally credited, and it was not until noon that the fact of its actual suspension was fully believed. Early in the morning the following circular appeared on 'Changes':—

New York Clearing House, Dec. 12, 1871. The Ocean National Bank having been suspended from the Clearing House, by the joint action of the Clearing House Committee and the Stockholders, you are particularly requested to attend a meeting of the association of the Clearing House, to be held at the Clearing House, at 11 o'clock to-morrow.

At the hour named for the meeting about seventy gentlemen were present, but the reporters were excluded. Mr. Vermilyea, of the Merchants' Bank, intimating that representatives of the press could see him and learn all particulars after the meeting adjourned. The meeting