

The New War Secretary.

It is an inexcusable mistake in southern journals to argue that any man appointed to public office is not a man of ability because there is not a better lawyer in the Union than Chief Justice WATTS, nor one more fully qualified to fill the high office he holds, and yet when he was appointed to it the New York papers spoke of him as a nobody, and declared that some great lawyer like WILLIAM M. EVARTS ought to have been made Chief Justice. Such articles are constantly appearing in the journals of New York city, which are really the journals published in the large cities of this country.

PARLIAMENTARY LAW.

On motion of Mr. ELLIOTT the use of the Senate chamber was granted to Rev. Isaac Tinsley for Thursday evening next to deliver a lecture on parliamentary law.

HOUSE OF DELEGATES.

The House met at 10 o'clock A. M. Speaker HANGER in the chair. No prayer.

PUT ON THE CALENDAR.

Under suspension of the rules the following Senate bills were put on the calendar: On motion of Mr. McLELLY, to provide for the registration of the voters of Wise county; on motion of Mr. BARKER, to incorporate the Manchester Railway and Land Improvement Company; on motion of Mr. BERRA, to permit the voters of Northumberland county to vote on the disposition of the cleve fund; on motion of Mr. POWELL, of Franklin, an act to amend the charter of the Milton and Sutherland Narrow-Gauge Railroad Company.

CALENDAR.

House bill appropriating \$2,000 for printing the documents of the Southern Historical Society was dismissed on motion of Mr. BOHANNON.

House bill to amend the act in relation to certain county officers and the collection of taxes came up on the amendment of Mr. FOWLER, to provide that there shall be no distraint for taxes prior to March 15 of each year except in case of parties about to abscond, &c. After much debate the amendment was adopted by 45 yeas to 43 nays, and the bill was ordered to be read a second time.

House bill to amend the act in relation to certain county officers so as to authorize the Auditor to appoint collectors, &c., was dismissed, on motion of Mr. LACY.

House bill to provide for the appointment of public educators or administrators, &c., was dismissed, on motion of Mr. DAVIS.

TAX BILL.

House bill imposing taxes, &c., was passed. A motion to reconsider was defeated; and Mr. CRUMP was named to communicate the passage of the bill to the Senate.

ROAD-LAW.

House bill to amend section 28 of the general road-law was dismissed, on motion of Mr. HOWARD.

DISTRICT OFFICERS.

House bill to provide for the election or appointment of additional district officers being put upon its engrossment was rejected.

PAY AND MISLEAG.

House bill to amend the Code in relation to pay and mileage of members of the General Assembly came up.

Mr. LEWIS moved to strike out \$540 per session and insert \$450.

Mr. STRAZER moved to insert \$900.

Mr. HUBARD moved to insert \$800.

Mr. LEWIS withdrew his amendment.

Mr. STRAZER desired to withdraw his amendment, but it was objected to.

Mr. BOHANNON moved to make the pay per session \$125. Rejected.

Mr. STRAZER's amendment was rejected.

Mr. MASSE offered as a substitute a bill reducing the pay of officers and employes in all departments of the State government fifteen per cent. Rejected.

The bill, without amendment, giving the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House each \$900, and members of the General Assembly each \$640, per regular session, and the President and Speaker each eight dollars per extra session; mileage, ten cents per mile, to and from place of meeting, was then ordered to be engrossed by 89 yeas to 11 nays.

NIGHT SESSION.

The chair was resumed at 7:30 P. M. The county treasurers' bill (House bill No. 20), on motion of Mr. POWELL of Franklin, was postponed until to-morrow at 1 P. M.

House bill in relation to the appointment of a State assayer and chemist was laid on the table, on motion of Mr. FOWELL of Franklin.

House bill to amend the act to authorize the Board of Public Works to sell the State's interest in the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad Company was passed by, as were a number of other bills.

Several House bills were ordered to engrossment for reading.

House bill (Mr. LETCHER'S) to impose a tax on dogs, and for the protection of sheep, &c., came up.

Mr. CROCKETT spoke at length and with great force in support of the bill and in behalf of sheep-husbandry.

Mr. HALE defended the dogs as the defenders of sheep against bears, wolves, foxes, &c. Mr. TARBELL said that he would vote for the bill if it were amended so as to exempt one dog for each housekeeper or head of a family.

Mr. J. A. CARTER also spoke for the bill. Mr. GORDON advocated the bill as a measure to protect the resuscitation of Virginia.

Mr. POWELL opposed the bill because he considered that he thus represented the wishes of his constituents.

On motion of Mr. A. I. CLARK, the bill was postponed till Monday next by a vote of 49 yeas to 44 nays.

AN INVESTIGATION ASKED.

Mr. CURTIS rose to a question of personal privilege, and demanded that a committee be appointed to investigate the charge made by some of the press of Richmond that he had seduced a young lady.

He was ruled out of order (Mr. BAGWELL in the chair), as the matter spoken of can only be reached by a resolution offered in the morning.

BILLS DISMISSED.

House bill to prohibit the taking or catching of fish with pound-nets was dismissed on motion of Mr. TALLFERRER of Gloucester.

House bill to amend the Code in relation to weighmaster of live-stock was considered. Messrs. HORNIGAN, GILMAN, and KELLAM supported the bill. It was opposed by Messrs. AMERSON and STRAZER. Mr. AMERSON moved to dismiss.

The bill was dismissed after a long debate. Adjourned at 10:30 P. M., on motion of Mr. HOWARD.

Acts that Have Become Laws.

The Governor approved the following acts March 18, 1876: To incorporate the Richmond Male Orphan Society.

To regulate the salaries of county judges. To incorporate the brotherhood of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia.

To amend and re-enact an act entitled an act for the removal of weirs and hedges in Sapponanock creek, approved January 8, 1876.

To incorporate the Virginia Christian Missionary Society.

The Clifton Forge Connection.

To the Editors of the Dispatch: A writer in the Dispatch of the 18th inst. has strenuously opposed the passage of the bill by the House of Delegates, which has been introduced to organize a company to construct a railroad from Clifton Forge to Buchanan to connect the Chesapeake and Ohio railroad with the canal at that point—a distance of only twenty-seven miles.

The ground of his objection seems to be mainly that it will divert the business of Lynchburg to Richmond, and subject them and Norfolk to Baltimore by having this short line absorbed into the Chesapeake and Ohio or the Valley railroads, and will make the iron-ore people above Buchanan fat at the expense of every other part of the State. The objection is very flimsy and ungrounded in reality. I think the great advantage of this connection, whether by rail or water, is to bring the superior and cheap coal of Kanawha in connection with the valuable iron ore which is laid in the bed of the James River. It is laid in the bed of both east and west Valley in immense masses, and the iron ore of the Blue Ridge can be brought to the mouth of the Chesapeake, and Ohio, and Kentucky, and conveyed by the Baltimore and Ohio railroad to the heart of Virginia, and prevent its diversion to Baltimore. Now, a railroad to make the iron-ore people above Buchanan fat at the expense of every other part of the State, or how it will not give the iron-ore people in the valley of James river east of Buchanan all the facilities of getting the Kanawha coal that the extension to Baltimore would be no practical thing. I confess I am unable to comprehend. In either case there would have to be a transshipment of the coal from the cars to the boat. In the one case it would be made at Clifton Forge; in the other at Buchanan, thirty-two miles by water nearer to the ore-beds east of Buchanan than at Clifton Forge. The extension that would reach the cities named is also beyond my comprehension. The coal and other tonnage thrown upon the canal at Buchanan would benefit Lynchburg, Richmond, Petersburg, and Norfolk as much as it would if thrown upon the canal at Clifton Forge.

But this writer's objection would be diverted to Baltimore from Buchanan by the Valley railroad. At Clifton Forge it is nearer to Baltimore than it would be at Buchanan. And when it is brought to Buchanan it is twenty-seven miles by rail nearer to Lynchburg and Richmond than it was at Clifton Forge. And the grades of the Valley railroad in the district of Lynchburg are at least as heavy as they are by the Chesapeake and Ohio road east of Clifton Forge, and a large portion of it, is done and other heavy work. It seems to me that the fears of the writer in question are vain and groundless.

It is a matter, if not of necessity, at least of great importance to Virginia, to have a railroad from Clifton Forge to Lynchburg, which should and would ultimately be extended to Richmond, in order to secure to our own State and cities the benefits to which we are entitled from the iron-ore and coal of the Kanawha. The facts stated it will appear that there is much greater danger of a diversion of the trade and travel by the Chesapeake and Ohio road from Clifton Forge to Baltimore than from Buchanan, even if that should be the terminus of the proposed railroad. It is evident that any route intended for Baltimore, whether by canal or rail, from Buchanan. Many of the best-informed and most practical men in the State are of opinion that it will be utterly impracticable for this important connection to be made by the canal company in its embarrassed financial condition, and that it is only practicable by the State. It seems that the able and honest president of the canal company, whose predilections were naturally in favor of the water-line, has, upon mature consideration of the subject, reluctantly come to the same conclusion. Who have we who is likely to be as well informed as to the financial condition of the canal company as he?

It is said that the bonds of the canal company bring up \$1,000,000. And it has required all the energy and address of the excellent president of the company to preserve it from bankruptcy. It is confidently believed if this connection is formed it will at once give vitality to the canal company, and will put it financially on firm ground, and give value to the immense capital which the State has invested in the company. It is, therefore, a matter of vast importance that the Legislature at its present session should provide by law for the prosecution of this work, which the friends of the railroad say can be executed in twelve months. But it is now late in the session. If the Senate bill, which I understand passes the Senate, is rejected by the House, the probability that nothing will be done at the present session. A whole year will be lost, and in the mean time the canal company may be forced into liquidation and the large interest of the State in the capital of the company sacrificed. In consideration of these views, it is urged upon the House, as was suggested in a previous No. of the Dispatch, to take up the Senate bill and pass it at once by PLAIN COMMON-SENSE.

From Mr. Curtiss.

FREDERICKSBURG, VA., March 19, 1876. Editors of the Dispatch: As an act of simple justice to a fully-accused man please state that I am innocent of the grave charge laid at my door. You published in your issue of the 18th inst. a report of an investigation, both judicial and legislative, feeling sure that truth and innocence must prevail.

Respectfully, T. SPIGEE CURTISS. [We publish the correction with much more satisfaction than we published the story.]

DEATHS.

Died on Monday, March 20, 1876, at half-past 11 o'clock A. M. in the 45th year of his age, JOHN A. BARKER, of the city of Richmond, a native of Virginia, and a member of the 18th regiment of the U. S. Army. He was a native of the city of Richmond, and was a member of the 18th regiment of the U. S. Army. He was a native of the city of Richmond, and was a member of the 18th regiment of the U. S. Army.

Religious Services at the Oregon-Hill Methodist Church to-night, conducted by members of the Young Men's Christian Association, commencing at a quarter to 8 o'clock.

MEETINGS.

MASONIC NOTICE.—The members of the Richmond Lodge No. 19, will assemble at the Masonic Hall this (Tuesday) evening at 8 o'clock, for the purpose of electing a new member. The members of the lodge are invited to be present. By order of the W. M., WILLIAM J. RICHMOND, Secy.

OLD DOMINION LODGE, No. 4, Knights of Pythias, will assemble at the Masonic Hall, corner of Main and Eleventh streets, on Monday, March 21, at 8 o'clock. Members of other lodges and friends are invited to be present. By order of the W. M., RICHMOND, Secy.

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE RICHMOND FIRE ASSOCIATION OF VIRGINIA, will be held at the company's office on Thursday, March 23, at 8 o'clock. By order of the Secy., T. BROOKS, Secy.

LECTURES.

LECTURE ON CRADLES, PAREGOLIC, AND BROOKLYN, by Rev. J. H. BARKER, at the Virginia Baptist Church, on Tuesday, March 21, at 8 o'clock. Tickets 25 cents. By order of the Secy., WILLIAM J. RICHMOND, Secy.

GARDEN SEEDS.—The undersigned has on hand a large stock of garden seeds, and is prepared to furnish them at the lowest prices. By order of the Secy., WILLIAM J. RICHMOND, Secy.

INSURANCE COMPANIES.

OFFICE FIDMONT AND ARLINGTON LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY, RICHMOND, VA., March 1, 1876.

TO OUR POLICY-HOLDERS:

As usual, we send you our annual greeting, and on another page present our report of financial condition. We cannot boast of an increased year business during the past year, but we can boast of a more improved financial condition. We have not only increased our assets, but we have also increased our liabilities, and we have also increased our capital.

The question of your policy is a matter of great importance to you, and we have taken the most careful and judicious steps to secure your interests. We have also taken the most careful and judicious steps to secure your interests.

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