

CURRENT TOPICS.

THE English House of Commons on the 8th voted the supplementary appropriation of £6,000,000 asked for by the Ministry. The vote upon division stood 328 yeas to 124 nays. Previous to the vote being taken, Sir Stafford Northcote, Chancellor of the Exchequer, communicated to the House the information that the British fleet had been ordered to Constantinople for the purpose of protecting British life and property. He also communicated a summary of the terms of the armistice, as given by Minister Layard. According to this the line of demarcation fixed by the armistice places in the Russian hands almost all of Bulgaria and Roumelia up to the lines of Constantinople and Gallipoli. Three days' notice is to be given before the resumption of hostilities. Another article of the armistice stipulates that the Turks are to remove their arms, etc., on evacuating places within the neutral zone which will divide the two armies. Sir Stafford Northcote said it was quite evident from this that, although the Russians have not occupied Constantinople lines, they have occupied the outskirts close to them, and as the lines, under the provisions of the armistice, are thoroughly dismantled, the Russians are able, after giving three days' notice, to advance upon Constantinople without hindrance.

—A London dispatch of the 11th says: The Porte has refused to allow the British fleet to approach Constantinople, and pending further negotiations the fleet remains in Besika Bay. Prince Gortschakoff has officially informed the Powers that Russia contemplates the occupation of Constantinople for the protection of the Christian population, and it is significantly added that the Sultan has invited the Grand Duke Nicholas to spend a few days in Constantinople. Orders have been issued for the dockyards at Chatham to hasten the completion of all war vessels under way, and hands are working over time.

THE bill for the improvement of the Mississippi River, prepared in accordance with the memorial of the St. Paul Convention and introduced in the House by Mr. Knapp of Illinois, provides for an appropriation of \$617,000 to secure a depth of five feet from St. Paul to the Des Moines Rapids; \$380,000 for improvements thence to the mouth of Illinois River; \$500,000 for securing a depth of eight feet thence to the mouth of the Ohio, and \$500,000 for 10 feet thence to New Orleans. The bill directs that the most serious obstacles to navigation shall receive attention first, and those of less importance subsequently. The system of improvements proposed is on the plan of the United States Engineers, involving dykes and movable dams. Inasmuch as it was found impracticable to secure the appointment of a special committee to take charge of the bill, it was placed in the hands of the Committee on Commerce, who are said to be friendly to the measure.

THE vote in the House on the 4th upon the motion of Mr. McMahon to suspend the rules and adopt a resolution instructing the Committee on Ways and Means to report a bill at the earliest practicable moment, imposing a gradual tax on incomes, shows that a large majority of the members are in favor of such a measure, although the necessary two-thirds were wanting—165 to 88—to order a suspension of the rules. Inasmuch as the Ways and Means Committee stand six to five in favor of an income tax, it is not unlikely that such a measure may be put through in the regular course of legislation during the present session. The Southern members voted almost unanimously in favor of Mr. McMahon's resolution, and a large majority of the Western members are also on record in the affirmative.

THE House Committee on Pacific Railroads have agreed to report a bill extending for 10 years the time of completion of the North Pacific Railroad. The bill reduces the land grant in Washington Territory, taking away such portion of land as was heretofore embraced in the appropriation for the construction of the road from Pend d'Oreille to Puget Sound.

THE House Committee on Judiciary have voted on the proposition for a Sixteenth Amendment to the Constitution as presented and advocated by the late Female Suffrage Convention. The vote was: Yeas—Lynde, Frye, Butler, Conger and Lapham—5. Nays—Knott,

Hartridge, Stenger, McMahon and Culbertson—5. Harris, of Virginia, who is opposed to female suffrage, being absent, there is no probability that the committee will at any time hereafter take favorable action on the subject.

THE new Pension bill, as agreed upon by the House Committee on Pensions, authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to restore to the pension rolls the names of all invalid pensioners now living which were stricken therefrom on account of disloyalty, and to pay them pensions from the 25th of December, 1868, at the same rate to which they would have been entitled had they not been stricken from the rolls; and no payment will be made on account of any pension previous to December 25, 1868, nor to the representative of any person not alive at the date of the passage of this act. The bill further provides that all pensions on account of death, wounds received, or disease contracted since March 6, 1861, which have been granted or shall be granted on applications filed previous to January 1, 1880, shall commence from the date of death or discharge from the service of the United States.

DELEGATE CANNON's bill for the admission of Utah as a State will be reported on adversely by the House Subcommittee on Territories. This determination is based on the fact that the admission of Utah would clothe Mormon priesthood with State sovereignty.

THE Pope died at about 5 p. m. on Thursday, the 7th of February. His last words were—"Guard the Church I loved so well and sacredly." The Cardinals and other dignitaries of the Church were present at the last moment. A Conclave of Cardinals assembled immediately after the Pope's death.

—The official account of the death of the Pope states that his Holiness remained calm throughout. At 11 o'clock, when his distressed breathing was painful to witness, he took a crucifix from under his pillow and blessed the bystanders therewith. At 3:30 p. m. the body became livid. Cardinals relieved each other in praying by the bedside. Cardinal Billio recited the office for the dying, and at the commencement of the fourth office the death-rattle ceased. The physicians state that the immediate cause of the Pope's death was paralysis of the lungs.

—A Rome dispatch of the 8th says in reference to the Pope's death: The Conclave will assemble immediately at the Vatican. The Pope left instructions which will be unsealed to-day, *présents cubero* (in the presence of the dead body of the late Pope), by the Chamberlain, and read to all the Cardinals now here. Prince Chigi, Marshal of the Conclave, has assumed his functions and given orders for the customary walling up of the doors of communication and the removal of persons now living on the same floor on which the Conclave assembles. The remains are to be temporarily deposited in the choir chapel of St. Peter's, and will finally be placed in the crypt. The Conclave will decide whether the funeral shall be public or private.

AUSTRIA's plan of a conference of the European Powers to consider the questions at issue between Russia and Turkey has at once met the approval of Germany, England, France and Italy. The Czar is pledged to refer certain points to a conference, though there is no allusion to this fact in the peace protocol, and some of the Russian official organs take ground against the conference project. Russia will necessarily accept the Austrian proposition, since it has been so promptly and directly sustained by the Powers which signed the Treaty of Paris, but objects to the conference being held at Vienna.

—A Vienna correspondent telegraphed on the 10th that Russia's reply to Austria's proposal to hold the conference in that city is received. Not only does it reject Vienna as the seat of the conference, but it declares that certain points in the peace preliminaries are not to be referred to the conference at all. Russia's alliance with Turkey is regarded as a fixed fact, and great alarm prevails in Vienna as to the final outcome of this complication. Orders to prepare Austria's best iron-clads for sea have been issued, and it is expected that the mobilization of the army will be decreed. The Turkish forces, in accordance with the peace preliminaries, have evacuated Widdin, Rastchuk, Silistira, Belgradschik and Erzeroum, and other places designated. The neutral zone is 12 miles broad.

THE Senate Committee on Railroads have begun the hearing of arguments in regard to the various pending propositions for legislation on the subject of the Southern Transcontinental Railroad.

The committee have agreed to hear three persons on the side of the Texas Pacific Company and three representatives of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company.

THE Southern Educational Convention was in session at Atlanta, Ga., on the 7th and 8th. Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, Missouri, Alabama and Louisiana were represented by State Superintendents, College Presidents and educators. Resolutions were passed favoring the creation of a National Educational Fund, from the proceeds of wild land sales and other sources, to be applied under the State laws on a basis of illiteracy, and a memorial was made to Congress to hasten such legislation.

A RUSSIAN paper estimates that about 40,000,000 bushels of wheat will be ready for shipment from Black Sea ports as soon as there is an absolute assurance of peace. The Turkish blockade of the Russian coast is already raised, and the exportation of the accumulations of breadstuffs will probably soon begin.

A WASHINGTON special of the 10th says: In a conference yesterday of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs with Secretary Evarts, at which Minister Foster was present and made a statement reviewing the Mexican situation since the accession of Diaz, the Secretary intimated that this Government is favorable to the recognition of Diaz, but the interests of American citizens in the nature of concessions and claims must be first adjusted, regarding it easier to accomplish this before than after. On the border question Mr. Foster took the ground that the present policy of self-protection is the only one which will insure security to the lives and property of American citizens along the Rio Grande.

PERSONAL AND POLITICAL.

THE President has nominated Joseph W. Huston, United States Attorney for the Territory of Idaho; Thomas Adamson, of Pennsylvania, Consul-General at Rio de Janeiro; Ernest L. Oppenheim, of New York, United States Consul at Guttenberg; Edward Wheeler, Collector Internal Revenue, Arkansas.

HARRY GENET, another well known member of the New York Tammany Ring, who absconded about the time set for his trial, has returned and given bail.

AN investigation of the charges preferred against Doorkeeper Polk of the House of Representatives was begun on the 5th.

PROFESSORS RILEY, Thomas and Packard, United States Entomological Commissioners, have asked the appropriation of \$25,000 for the next year, to enable the Commission to continue its labors in the Southern States, and to attempt the eradication of the army-worm, which now does so much damage to cotton.

COL. NATHANIEL C. MACRAE died in Cincinnati on the 5th, in his 72d year. He was born in Prince William County, Va., graduated at West Point in 1826, was placed on the retired list at the breaking out of the rebellion, at which time he had full rank of Major and a brevet of Colonel.

MRS. CLAYTON, of Hartford, Ct., clever and pretty, has started out as a temperance revivalist. Another woman, a Mrs. Malloy, is conducting meetings in Athol, Mass.

DR. LUNSFORD P. YANDELL, Sr., of Louisville, Ky., celebrated as physician editor and author, and well known throughout the country, died on the 4th, in his 73d year.

GEN. GRANT was splendidly entertained at a party in Cairo, Egypt, given him by Gen. Batcheller, formerly of Saratoga, but now an American Judge in Egypt. The entertainment was attended by many Egyptian dignitaries.

A DUEL was fought at Matamoros, Mexico, on the 5th, the principals being Hon. Nestor Maxan and M. de La Pena, both residents of Brownsville, Texas. Maxan was seconded by Wm. Kelley, and Pena by Dr. Combe. Two rounds were fired without effect, when Pena announced himself satisfied. Maxan, however, demanded another round, which resulted in his receiving a fatal wound through the body, causing death in a few minutes. The cause of the duel is not stated.

THE Jury in the case of Gen. Anderson, late of the Louisiana Returning Board, on trial at New Orleans, on the 7th rendered a verdict of guilty, accompanied by a recommendation for mercy.

THE President has nominated the following Indian Agents: Charles A. Raffee, of Minnesota; Chippewa Agency, Minnesota; Jno. W. Douglass, of New York, Yankton Agency, Dakota; Samuel S. Ely, Pennsylvania, Pawnee Agency, Indian Territory; Philemon B. Hunt, of Kentucky, Kiowa and Crow Agency, Indian Territory.

THE House Committee on Education and Labor have agreed to report a bill to distribute the proceeds of sales of public lands among the several States for the purposes of education.

THE Senate Committee on Commerce will report adversely on the nomination of George Williamson as Collector at New Orleans.

LOUIS MONTPLAISIR and Jas. Prince, the colored jurors in the Anderson trial at New Orleans, state to responsible parties that their verdict, "Guilty, but recommended to the mercy of the Court," was given under the impression that this was

tantamount to an acquittal, and that they were so informed by the other jurors. Anderson has a dispatch signed by John Sherman, Stanley Matthews, Garfield, Hale and Doty, of the visiting Republicans earnestly protesting his innocence of any fraud, and denouncing his trial and conviction as the exhibition of bitter sectional partisanship.

THE House Committee on Elections will report in favor of seating J. H. Acklen, Democrat, from the Third District of Louisiana, in place of C. B. Darrall, the sitting member.

THE Vice-President and Speaker Randall are strictly enforcing the rule prohibiting sales of liquors, including lager beer, in the Capitol.

CARDINAL McCLOSKEY sailed from New York on the 9th, expecting to reach Rome on the 22d, five days after the assembling of the Conclave.

THEODORE S. FAXTON, of Utica, East N. Y., who began life as a stage-driver, has recently endowed three charitable institutions in that city to the amount of over \$100,000.

WM. C. BENNEY, a prominent resident and churchman of Amesburg, Mass., is missing, and his name is mentioned in connection with irregularities in managing funds intrusted to his charge.

SIR PETER COATES, the great English spool-cotton manufacturer, is visiting New Orleans.

THE President has approved the joint resolution extending the thanks of Congress to Henry M. Stanley.

THE Senate has confirmed Frederick Salomon, of St. Louis, as Surveyor General of Utah Territory.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT, recently nominated by the President for Collector of the Port of New York, is dead.

HON. CHARLES M. CONRAD, ex-Member of Congress, ex-United States Senator, and Secretary of War under President Fillmore, died at New Orleans on the 11th, aged 73.

HON. GIDEON WELLES, ex-Secretary of the Navy, died at his home in Hartford, Conn., on the 11th.

SENATOR THURMAN ON SILVER.

Abstract of His Speech in the Senate on the Bland Bill.

In the Senate, on the 7th, consideration of the Silver bill was resumed and Senator Thurman spoke in favor thereof.

He argued that silver and gold had been the metallic money of the world for thousands of years. They were also the money of the Colonies, and afterward of the United States, from the Declaration of Independence until silver was demonetized by mistake and without the knowledge of the people or Congress, or by the enactment of the Revised Statutes in 1874. Both metals are suited to perform the functions of money, and silver does perform that function among the various parts of the human race. Silver is especially suited for small transactions, and may therefore be properly called the money of people in humble circumstances. It follows that the burden of proof rests on those who insist that silver should be demonetized.

Our currency would continue to be the dollar of 42½ grains would defraud the public creditors. This can not be true, for the contract is to pay in either gold or silver of the standard value of the United States on July 14, 1870, when the silver dollar of 42½ grains was full legal tender, with the right of unlimited coinage, and it is simply impossible that a person performing his contract, entered into by both parties, but with full knowledge of its terms and effect, can thereby be guilty of fraud or dishonor. Both houses of Congress have by overwhelming majorities decided that no such fraud would be perpetrated by paying the public creditors in silver dollars of 42½ grains. If remonetizing silver would bring it to par with gold, the public creditor can not lose. It is said that to coin a silver dollar of 42½ grains and make it full legal tender, would defraud individual creditors who have held money or sold property to other individuals since silver was demonetized, that is, since June 22, 1874. This is a great mistake. Every creditor of the foregoing description is compelled by law to receive greenbacks in payment unless his contract expressly provides for payment in metallic money, and these exceptional cases are not affected by the bill under consideration. Now, no one, I think, doubts that if the coinage of a dollar of 42½ grains be restored, and it is made full legal tender, its value will be at least equal to that of the greenback. Hence no possible injury to the individual creditor, such as that above supposed, can occur. If, as has been asserted, the average duration of individual debts in the United States is about two years—I think it is less—then it is easy to see that the passage of the bill can not injure any considerable number of creditors, if, indeed, it should injure any, for it is certain that in the next two years not over fifty million silver dollars could be coined, and nearly all such dollars would be absorbed by the payment of existing contracts, and would be used for nothing else. It is argued that if this bill pass silver will be a less valuable currency than gold, and will expel gold from the country, in accordance with what is called Gresham's law, namely, that the least valuable currency drives out the more valuable, and hence silver amendments have been offered to increase the number of grains in the silver dollar, so as to make it an equivalent, as it is said, of the gold dollar. This objection to the bill rests upon the assumption that the silver dollar of 42½ grains, if made full legal tender, will be of less value than the gold dollar.

Mr. Thurman argued that this assumption was incorrect, and said: If the greenback, which has no intrinsic value, no circulation outside of the United States, and is a limited legal tender here, is yet within less than two per cent of par with gold, why should not silver money, which has an intrinsic value, and which circulates over the greater part of the globe, if indorsed with the full legal-tender faculty, rise to par with gold? Especially if we rate the metals at 15 1/2-160 to 1, which most other nations using both give but 15 1/2 for 1. One reason why greenbacks have been and are depreciated, is the fact that they have not been receivable in payment of customs duties, or of interest on the public debt; but make the silver dollar of 42½ grains full legal tender and it will be receivable for both these purposes, and it must closely approximate, if it does not reach, par with gold. I believe that it will reach it. But suppose it does not, and suppose Gresham's law to have its effect; to what extent would gold be expelled from the country by silver? Manifestly only a few millions of dollars. Three hundred millions of dollars in gold could not be driven out by an issue of 500,000,000 in silver. The utmost effect could only be to expel 50,000,000 of gold, the place of which would be taken by silver, and the volume of the metallic amendments have been offered to increase the number of grains in the silver dollar, so as to make it an equivalent, as it is said, of the gold dollar. This objection to the bill rests upon the assumption that the silver dollar of 42½ grains, if made full legal tender, will be of less value than the gold dollar.

Whether the people of the United States would give up the use of small notes he would not venture to predict; but if they would not

they must agree that with us metallic money shall not be shorn of its function, that of a circulating medium. Another set of reasoners argued that silver would go out of the country should the dollar of 42½ grains be coined; that, as silver was undervalued in the dollar of 42½ grains as compared with its valuation in the States of the Latin Union, it will leave here, and flow into those States to open their mints to an unlimited coinage of five franc pieces, but he thought they would not do so.

Another objection to the bill was that if it should become law, we would be flooded with silver; that Germany would pour her surplus silver on us, and our mints would produce so much that we would have more than we knew what to do with. He had no fear of Germany. It was said that she had \$80,000,000 to spare. Suppose it was all poured into the United States, we could absorb it all without injury. But it would not be poured into this country. Germany could not spare her silver. But if she could, the greater part of it would be much more likely to go to Asia and to Russia, Austria and Spain, to say nothing of the Latin States, than to come to the United States, which undervalues silver, as compared with the rest of the world. He did not think we had anything to fear from an excessive product of our mints. He had not considered an inflationist, but he knew of no valid reason against enlarging our specie basis, and if we are to have and maintain specie payments, it must be enlarged.

Another objection to the bill was the well known argument against bimetalism; such most gloomy pictures had been drawn of the ruin that would befall our country if we adopt bimetalism. He argued that it was by no means certain that the standard value was less variable in a bimetallic than it was in a single metal standard of value was an impossibility. Had there ever been a more prosperous country than the United States from 1789 to 1867? Did any nation ever exceed the progress we made in population, wealth, education, refinement and general well-being of the people in these 73 years? And yet, during all that period, we had bimetalism; for we gave no preference to gold over silver, or silver over gold. Those metals fluctuated then as they have since, and probably ever will do. But no American statesman of that period thought of demonetizing either. And now it is our turn to Europe for a moment. What do we hear? The wailings of thousands of laboring men, women and children thrown out of employment. The cries of anguish of thousands of other men, who but a year ago were rich, but now bankrupt. In a word, the reason of our distress is that we affect our ears in our distressed land. But from what countries do they mainly come? Two—from gold-monometallic England and gold-monometallic Germany—while bimetallic France, the land of silver as well as gold, enjoys a prosperity hardly exceeded by any people on earth.

It had been argued that our foreign commerce would be destroyed, would be disintegrated, by the passage of the pending bill. Had we not carried on business during the past sixteen years with an interconvertible paper currency, at once of the same value of trade in our favor now? Again, it had been argued that national credit would be destroyed. How destroyed? By the United States paying our bonds as we promised to pay them. The United States needed no such prop as a single gold standard to support its credit. The resources of the country were too well known for her credit to be injured. He longed to see our indebtedness held at home and not abroad. There would then be no annual drain from America to enrich Europe. A telegram this morning informed us that \$300,000 worth of our bonds were on the way home from England. They would be selling back there soon, whether this bill passed or not, as the interest upon our bonds was greater than that upon any safe European stocks. If our bonds should be sent home, they must find purchasers in the United States; and suppose that should find such purchasers, would not every one in the land be glad that our bonds were held at home? The English debt was held by Englishmen, the French debt by Frenchmen, and he hoped that the day would come when the American debt would be held by Americans.

Our currency would continue to be small paper money, and the problem for Congress to solve was upon what basis it should rest. We could not maintain a paper currency convertible at all times into coin, unless we employed silver as well as gold for its base. Unless silver should become a full legal tender, the idea of specie payment in the United States would soon be abandoned. Every opponent to an irredeemable paper currency and every friend of specie currency should insist upon the full remonetization of silver. If this bill should become law, the tendency would be to put a stop to the demonetization of silver in other countries. Should we postpone remonetization of silver till a compact with other nations be made, it would never be remonetized. He hoped that our country would be ranged by the side of the bimetallic States. Let the people of the United States do not intend to abandon the use of silver. Silver was an American product. Many millions of dollars and the labor of thousands of men were employed in its production in this country; and to destroy or cripple this industry would be cruel and unjust.

A Dead-Letter Romance.

Until recently there has come to the Dead-letter Division of the Post-office Department, with the regularity of the daily mail, a letter bearing the postmark of an Eastern city, and addressed simply "Philip Gregory, Esq.," on the envelope, but without any direction to indicate whither it was intended to be sent. These letters were dated with the day of the month and year, beginning, "My own darling Philip," and ending, "Your faithful and affectionate Mary." They were strangely tender, always trustful, never upbraiding. They ever bore the assurance of her faith in his love, and the belief that he would some day come back to her. They were in the handwriting and language of a refined and cultured lady. As the years went by, the lines grew tremulous with age, but the love they uttered was young and strong and constant. At last they came no more, and a loss was felt in the dusty dimness of the dead-letter files by the toilers there, as if some old friend had been stricken by the hand of death. There being nothing in them to indicate the residence of the writer, they were destroyed, being of "no value." Thus, every day in the year, from the morning of maidenhood to the evening of old age, did this "daughter of tears" send forth a letter to her lost lover, hoping one might chance to reach him; but he never came, and she went down into the shadows of the Unknown, trusting him still. If it was a form of insanity, I would there were more of it in the world.—Cleveland Herald.

HERE is an advertisement from a little Michigan girl which appears in the *Genesee Democrat*, and that paper vouches for its genuineness: "Lost.—Maltese cat; green eyes; very slender; a sweet grey; goes by the name of Lady Jane Grey, or Mamma Gay; belongs to Lillian Gold. A suitable reward will be given."