VIRGINIA

THE CONSTITUTION—STATE RIGHTS

RICHMOND WHIG

SATURDAY MORNING, FEB. 16, 1861.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

☞ *Letters on business must be addressed to the "Editor of the Whig.*

Articles written on both sides of the paper will not be published. This is a rule of long standing, ought to be known to all, and will in no case be departed from. Obituary notices exceeding eight lines are charged for as advertisements.

☞ *We cannot undertake to return rejected communications*

The Great Floyd Robbery.

According to recent developments, history furnishes but few names that will run parallel in infamy with that of John B. Floyd. He deliberately robbed the Treasury of untold amounts of the people's money—and then *seceded.* He could remain in the Cabinet no longer, because his "honor" was touched! What is *his* honor, who has thrust his hands into honest men's pockets, and taken therefrom millions of money by the grossest abuse of his place and station? It is in vain to put forward that obscure clerk, Bailey, to carry the mountain of Floyd's guilt into the wilderness of obscurity.

Circumstances cannot—will not—lie. Floyd issues an indefinite, unrecorded amount of illegal obligations. Russell & Co. cannot cancel them as agreed. Now read again, and remember, what method was adopted to get up these acceptances. The following is from the report of the Committee of the House of Representatives:

Mr. Lea did not introduce Mr. Bailey, to Mr. Russell, nor does he state that he appointed for them a place of meeting; yet it happened that these two persons did meet at the War Department on the same day that the interview between Mr. Lea and Mr. Bailey occurred. Mr. Russell says this was between the 12th and 15th days of last July. It was probably on the 13th day of that month. The chief clerk of the War Department, Secretary Floyd's most intimate friend, Col. W. R. Drinkard, was the medium through whom the introduction took place. On that day they had their first interview at the War Department. Col. Drinkard, as shown by his own evidence impressed Mr. Bailey with the idea that Mr. Russell was a gentleman of great respectability and pecuniary resources, and that if the acceptances of the Secretary of War were allowed to go to protest he (the Secretary) would be "greatly agonized and disturbed." Messrs. Russell and Bailey held a private interview in the third story of the department, and within a few hours thereafter Mr. Bailey delivered to Mr. Russell $150,000 of bonds at the house of the latter person in Washington city, and on the same evening the recipient returned with them to New York.

Mr. Russell states that he left with Mr. Bailey the note of Russell, Majors & Waddell in their stead as security.—Ninety of these one hundred and fifty bonds were Missouri's, and the balance Tennessee's. Mr. Russell does not recollect, at first, whether or not the January coupons were on the bonds, but states that subsequently the most of the bonds were retired by him in order to obtain those coupons to return to Mr. Bailey, as he (Bailey) was positive in his request to have them returned. The coupons having been taken off, the bonds were afterwards disposed of. The object was, of course, to conceal the fraud; for, if the coupons were on hand it was not probable that the bonds would be demanded or inquired for.

According to the statement of Mr. Russell, there was no further correspondence or communication between Mr. Bailey and himself until the September following.—At that time he returned to Washington for the purpose of obtaining others. An interview was held with Mr. Bailey, the result of which was that three hundred and eighty-seven bonds, in addition to those first taken, were transferred to Mr. Russell on the following day. The protection of the honor of Secretary Floyd, the necessity of providing for the other acceptances and the bonds previously delivered, and which were alleged to have been hypothecated, were assigned as the reasons for requiring further assistance.

We call special attention to the fact, referred to by a Washington contemporary, that this meeting was in the *War Department*—conducted on one side by the chief clerk of Floyd, and his most intimate friend. The object was to save the Secretary from "disturbance and *agony.*" The method of deliverance was to steal a million of bonds from "poor Indians," and the fact to be kept a profound secret from Floyd. Magnanimous friends!—Brave men will now and then die for a friend—many will suffer for another anything but dishonor—but Floyd has found what no page of history has ever embalmed, what no imagination of poet or novelist has ever painted, a friend in whose bosom glows the celestial flame of the purest friendship, and at the sametime a willingness to testify its fidelity by the foulest crime. Floyd made one acceptance for $135,000 at one time, which exactly makes up the sum necessary to cover the stolen bonds, and yet knew nothing of the purpose for which that enormous and unusual sum was needed. Which will you believe, the bare word of Floyd, or these disinterested witnesses? But this committee bring the falsehood directly home to the Secretary. He assured Mr. Benjamin that he was acting according to the custom of his department. The Committee show that no such practice existed till instituted by Floyd. Moreover, Floyd assured Mr. Benjamin that the practice should cease, and still went on to issue these acceptances. This is the only point where there is any evidence that the President was at all acquainted with this financial operation of Floyd. Two days after Mr. Benjamin notifies the President, Floyd writes that Senator notice that *he shall issue no more acceptances.*

This was done in accordance with the directions of the President to Floyd. All subsequent acceptances were in violation of the instruction of the President and the pledged word of Floyd.

Do not all these facts prove that Floyd is a living mass of corruption from his head to his heels? And ought he not to be forever hereafter shunned and despised by every honest man in the land?

A Flimsy Argument.

The Tennessee *Chronicle* remarks that, as an argument in favor of immediate secession, we are told that a majority of the Northern States have violated the Constitution, nullified a law of Congress, and aided in giving us a sectional President whose leading political idea is opposition to slavery. This is all true; and more than this, the same party—acting upon the license granted them by the resolutions of "98-9"—has virtually repudiated a decision of the Supreme Court, a co-ordinate Department of the Government. But does it follow, because lawless fanaticism has done these things, that the South shall abandon its rights in the Union—submit to these wrongs without a struggle, and fly from the uplifted arm of the enemy and seek safety and protection under another government yet to be organized? This is not the way statesmen and brave patriots ought to act, and we trust that Virginia will not fly as long as there is a chance for victory, but bravely face the enemy, and, if defeated, then retreat with honor to a position outside of the Union. It will be as easy to secede under Lincoln as it is under the dotard who now dozes in the White House, and it will be more magnanimous to defy the Republican leader, when the proper time comes, than to elude the imbecile grasp of Buchanan for fear that a stronger hand may hold the reins of Government. Should coercion be the policy of the incoming Administration, Virginia will stand ready to discharge her whole duty, but whilst that question is in abeyance, let her pursue the course dictated by true patriotism and wisdom, and if the worst must come, she will stand acquitted in the opinion of mankind, of all responsibility for whatever may follow. A good cause and a clear conscience will be her shield and solace in the hour of trial, and should brave hearts and strong arms be needed to meet this crisis, not the fewest of these will be furnished by those Virginians who are now stigmatized as submissionists.

Lincoln can harm us no more if we secede after his inauguration than if we go out now. In either case, he will have the army and navy, if he can make them fight, and the empty Treasury, if he can make it available.—Why, then, should he be held up as a bugbear to frighten us into hasty action? If he chooses to settle the controverted rights of the South by inaugurating civil war, let him take the responsibility; but whilst there is peace, let Virginia strive to continue it by securing her own rights in the Union, and with them the rights of her sister slave States.

Truthfully Interpreted.

The voice of Virginia, at the late elections, is very accurately interpreted by the Washington correspondent of the Boston *Courier*, who says: "The voice of Virginia is significant and hopeful. It is a knell to the disunionists North no less than South. Attempts are made in both quarters to pervert it, and to give it, if possible, an uncertain sound. On the part of the South, it is pretended that a Unionist in Virginia is at best but a man who will insist upon such concessions from the North as he knows will not be made. And on the part of the North, the "back-bone" anti-compromise leaders—disunionists in fact—would fain persuade themselves and their followers, that Virginia has spoken so emphatically for the Union, that no proposals for conciliation, no movements whatever on their part, are needed to secure their adherence to the Union as it is.

These are both distorted views. The truth, as is usual in such cases—lies between them. The Unionists of Virginia—those who have triumphed in the recent election—are not unconditional Unionists, or *Submissionists*, as the phrase is. They are true friends of the Union, who will spare no efforts, within the bounds of reason and their essential rights, to preserve it. But the protection of these rights they will insist upon, and a guaranty of a reasonable nature will be a *sine qua non* of their adhesion to the Union in its present divided condition. It is in this sense that the people of Virginia are right, and that the vote they have just given is hopeful. They have determined to stay in the Union if they can, or go out of it if they must. It lies with the North to decide whether they shall go or remain—not with the representatives, but the people of the North; and they will decide right, if they can but have the opportunity."

The Fourth of March and Reconstruction.

The Precipitating Secessionists are for going out of the Union by the 4th of March. Some of them argue that if this course is pursued the chances will be increased to bring about a reconstruction of the Government under the present Constitution with additional guarantees. Whether they are sincere in the latter position, or merely hold out the idea of reconstruction to strengthen the cause of immediate Secession, we cannot undertake to decide. But both the ideas are the most shallow and untenable that we have seen advanced on the subject.—They are of the class of humbugs both without reason and without excuse. It is our duty to contend by every honorable expedient to secure our rights within the Union, and after a thorough effort in that behalf, if we fail, the failure will show that it is impossible to live in a political association with those who deny these rights. It will then be our duty, not by a false pretense of a right to "secede," but by a manly and dignified act of revolution, to throw off that government, and proceed to erect one in its stead, which will secure our rights as freemen—and then the idea of reconstruction, a patching up of the old government, will be out of the question. It will altogether be a new affair, composed of just such elements as agree upon its form and substance, and upon none other. Any other theory but this is false and mischievous. The people should not be cheated out of a government by any such notions of the 4th of March and reconstruction as these to which we have alluded.

The Action of Virginia.

Speaking of the result of the recent elections in Virginia, and the probable action of the State in the present emergency, the Augusta *Chronicle and Sentinel*—a leading Whig organ of the largest and most prosperous of the seceded States—holds the following language, which is not without significance, and we accordingly direct attention to its observations:

But while there is undoubtedly a most crushing majority of the Convention opposed to immediate secession, it is still no doubt true that Virginia will not consent to remain in the Union, unless some adjustment be made. What sort of adjustment will she require? Undoubtedly she would prefer the Crittenden Compromise—perhaps not only on her account, but in the hope that it might bring back the seceded States. However, the present appearance of things indicates pretty clearly, that the seceded States are not for *any kind* of reconstruction—at least that seems to be the feeling among the delegates at Montgomery, though, by and by, the people may speak a different language, unless the Montgomery Congress be *exceedingly discreet* in its action.

The unconditional rejection by South Carolina, of Virginia's propositions for reconciliation and reconstruction, has contributed largely to the success of the opponents of immediate secession. Virginia sees that the seceded States have not any disposition to consult her wishes, her feelings, or her interests, and none *just yet* to listen to any terms by which the Union may be saved, or reconstructed. Therefore, with all sympathies for her Southern slaveholding sisters, she feels that she has been snubbed, and, gallant old commonwealth that she is, she turns her attention solely to her own interest and to the common interests of the Border States of the South—States more intimately bound up with her destiny than the Seceding States. She feels conscious, that while she cannot, in honor, submit to Lincoln's rule, except upon her terms, she is far removed in interest from the proposed Cotton States Confederacy, especially as that Confederacy is for *free trade and direct taxation*, and possibly for the African slave trade.

Self centered, proud, great, noble, glorious, she may now consider other propositions than the Crittenden compromise. If she should consent, and her border sisters of the South with her, to either the Border proposition or the Adams, we feel no sort of doubt she would get them and thus save her honor. The Border State Compromise, we believe, is to prohibit slavery, by constitutional provision, North of 36 deg. 30 min., and leave all South to come into the Union as States, with or without slavery, as their constitutions prescribe, with a distinct declaration that in the meantime neither Congress nor the Territorial Legislature shall prohibit or establish slavery, leaving it to take the chances under the law, the Constitution and the decision of the Supreme Court. Adams proposes to admit New Mexico as a State, with or without slavery, as its constitution may prescribe—slavery being already recognized by territorial law—and to amend the Constitution so as to prohibit Congress from ever interfering with slavery in the States, in any manner whatever. Looking to practical effects, either of these propositions may perhaps be safely and honorably accepted by the Border Southern States; especially in face of the fact that *no terms at present* can bring the Cotton States back. As the principle is "every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost," we think it highly probable that either the Border State, or the Adams proposition, will be satisfactory to Virginia and her immediate sisters, and that the Southern Confederacy may safely count on not more than seven or eight States, and *no territory.* Thus things seem tending now, according to our apprehension. As we have refused to consult the Border States, and especially as we have declared our separation *perpetual*, no terms being listened to, we believe the Border States will now leave us to ourselves, if they can get what will satisfy *their own honor and interests.* But, we shall see what we shall see, soon.

OUR WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the Whig

WASHINGTON, Feb. 14, 1861.

To-day the great Gaines case came up in the Supreme Court. The question of secession will not, it is now said, be raised, owing to the fact that the case was appealed before the passage of the Louisiana ordinance. The facts of the case are briefly these: On March 27, 1857, Mrs. Myra Clark Gaines filed a bill against twenty-four defendants, among them Hon. John Slidell, averring that she was the sole heiress of Daniel Clark, and, as such, entitled to some eighteen different portions of land, comprising, in the aggregate, nearly half the territory on which New Orleans is built, and estimated of a value of $25,000,000. Judge McCaleb, of the District Court, decided adversely to Mrs. Gaines, on the ground that there was no proof of her being the legitimate daughter of Daniel Clark. An appeal was taken in June, 1859; the record of the Circuit Court, sent up on appeal, amounts to 2,120, pages of manuscript, contains evidence in English French, Spanish and Latin, and involves the consideration of almost every principle of equity. Quite a concourse were assembled in the Court room, Mrs. Gaines, who is a woman of dauntless perseverance and energy, occupying a seat within the bar, by her counsel.

The Artillery companies quartered here were out on Pennsylvania Avenue to-day, for exercise, presenting a fine appearance. I learn that the guns of the Artillery and the muskets of the Infantry were fully loaded yesterday, and such disposition made that all the garrison here could have been concentrated at any point in the city in half an hour.

Intelligence of the 11th ultimo, from South Carolina, asserts that Fort Sumter will be immediately assaulted. Senator Hunter made a powerful speech to-day against the loan and tariff bill reported by Simmons, asserting that the articles required by the South were to be rated in the most unjust and iniquitous manner. Lincoln's Indianapolis speech has been productive of the profoundest sensation in Border State circles, and is understood to have retarded, in some degree, the action of the Peace Congress. Mr. Buchanan will leave for Wheatland immediately after the fourth of March. Cochrane, of New York, presents, on behalf of the ladies, a stand of colors to Company C, Washington Light Infantry, to-night. Pryor's resolution of enquiry, adopted to-day, will bring out the truth of the reports that the seceding Senators and Representatives carried off loads of books, documents, seeds, etc., at their departure. I do not believe a word of the rumor. The office-seeking tribes begin to shoal in, and are said to be uncommonly voracious.

SIC.

THE ABSTRACTION OF THE INDIAN BONDS—THE PRESIDENT'S INSTRUCTIONS TO MR FLOYD.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 13.—In reference to the statement made by Senator Benjamin, before the Select Committee of the House, that he had informed the President that Mr. Floyd was issuing acceptances to Russell, it is due to the President to say that he immediately thereafter sent for Mr. Floyd, and inquired by what authority he issued them. Mr. Floyd said there was no law for or against it, but it had been the practice of the Department. The President said that the practice was wrong, and instructed him to pay what he had issued, but to issue no more, which Mr. Floyd promised to do, the President being under the impression that only a small sum of money was involved.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND SECESSION.—In Louisiana the Protestant Episcopal church secedes with the State. A pastoral letter from Bishop Polk, of that diocese, contains this passage:

"Our separation from our brethren of 'The Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States' has been effected, because we must follow our nationality. Not because there has been any difference of opinion as to Christian doctrine or catholic usage. Upon these points we are still one. With us it is a separation, not a division—certainly not alienation. And there is no reason why, if we should find the union of our dioceses under our national church impracticable, we should cease to feel for each other the respect and regard with which purity of manners, high principle, and a manly devotion to truth never fail to inspire in generous minds. Our relations to each other hereafter will be the relations we both now hold to the men of our Mother Church of England."

VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE.

SENATE.

FRIDAY, Feb. 15, 1861.

The Senate was called to order at 11 o'clock.

A communication from the House, announced the passage by that body of Senate bill for protecting fisheries on the Potomac river and Chesapeake bay, with amendments, which were concurred in by the Senate.

BILLS REPORTED.

To incorporate the Staffordsville Toll Bridge company; to amend the charter of the Bank of Commerce of Fredericksburg; for the appointment of a public administrator in each county and corporation; for relief of Celia Edmonds; to legalize proceedings on Sunday in certain cases; providing for the voluntary enslavement of George, Sheds, Sam and Sukey, persons of color, in the county of Buckingham.

A petition was presented from the commanding officer of the 181st regiment Virginia Militia, asking for a work on military tactics.

RELIEF FOR THE BANKS.

Mr. ISBELL called for the order of the day, being House bill for the relief of the Banks of the Commonwealth, reported by the committee with an amendment providing "that it shall be the duty of the several banks and branch banks, of the State, whenever required by the Governor, to redeem, in specie or specie funds, such an amount of their notes as may be necessary to meet the demands upon the treasury of the Commonwealth, and to this end the contribution shall be rateable, and in proportion to the amount of the notes on each bank or branch bank, which may be received by the treasurer in payment of public revenue."

The amendment of the committee was agreed to.

Mr. ARMSTRONG proposed an amendment, which elicited some discussion between Messrs. Armstrong, August, Wickham, and others.

Mr. ARMSTRONG finally withdrew his amendment, in order to parfect it, and on his motion the bill was laid on the table, and made the order of the day at 11 o'clock to-morrow.

BILLS PASSED.

The following Senate bills were taken up and passed:

Senate bill amending the 6th section of chapter 165 of the Code of Virginia, to compensate Attorneys for the Commonwealth in the Circuit Courts in cities and towns for service heretofore rendered by them.

Increasing the number of permanent clerks in the office of Auditor of Public Accounts.

For the relief of the securities of James R. Courtney, of Westmoreland county.

The following House bill was also passed:

Incorporating the Sweet Calybeate Springs Company.

RESOLUTIONS.

On motion of Mr. AUGUST—Resolved, That a select committee of three be appointed to enquire into the expediency of reporting a bill authorizing Howell L. Thomas as Attorney for Jacques and others, to convey certain real estate. Committee—Messrs. August, Isbell, and Bruce, who subsequently reported the bill.

The following resolutions of enquiry were also adopted:

By Mr. CRITCHER—Authorizing the Monticello Bank, or the Bank of the Commonwealth, to establish an office of discount and deposit at Monaskon, in the county of Lancaster.

By Mr TALIAFERRO—Of relieving the securities of Thomas K. Davis, late sheriff of Prince William county, for the years 1857-'58.

By Mr. AUGUST—Repealing so much of the law as imposes penalties upon sheriffs for failing to pay into the treasury monies received by them for the State.

On motion of Mr. PENNYBACKER, the Senate adjourned.

HOUSE OF DELEGATES.

FEBRUARY 15, 1861.

The House was called to order at 12 o'clock, M. by the Speaker.

A communication was received from the Senate, announcing the passage of certain bills, and asking the concurrence of the House in the same.

SENATE BILLS PASSED.

Amending an act incorporating the Farmville and Buckingham Plank Road company; amending an act transfering a part of the Prices Mountain and Cumberland Gap Road to the Mountain Lake and Salt Sulphur Springs Turnpike company.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES.

Incorporating the Independent Female College; incorporating the town of Asbury; incorporating the Staunton Armory and Ordnance Company; amending an act incorporoting a company to construct a railroad on the plan of James S. French, between Alexandria and Washington; incorporating the trans-Alleghany railroad company; Senate bill staying proceedings on trust deeds in cases where notes will not be received in payment of debt; authorizing the Governor to pardon a negro slave, Tom; amending the 36th section of chapter 38 of the Code; providing for summoning jurors in the Hustings and Circuit Courts of the town of Lychburg; incorporating the Merchants' Savings Bank; incorporating the Staffordsville Toll Bridge company; refunding a certain sum of money to Hugh H. Hite; incorporating the Home Savings Bank, and the Aid Savings Bank of the city of Richmond.

ADVERSE REPORT.

To amend the 8th sec. of chap. 200 of the Code.

PETITIONS PRESENTED.

By Mr. BAILEY—The petitions of citizens of McDowell county in relation to the removal of the Court-house of said county.

By Mr. BASSIL—The petition of citizens of Upshur county, asking to have refunded certain sums of money, by them erroneously paid. Also of citizens of the same county, asking the passage of a Stay Law.

By Mr. ALDERSON—For the formation of a new county of parts of Greenbrier, Fayette and Nicholas.

By Mr. HARRISON—Of citizens of Rockingham county, for the relief of John Robinson.

RESOLUTIONS OF INQUIRY.

By Mr. DICKENSON—To amend the 4th section of chapter 141 of the Code, so as to allow a greater rate of interest than six per cent. by special contract.

By Mr. SEGAR—Of allowing to Henry Exall his claim for furnishing a plan of alterations in the hall of the House of Delegates.

By Mr. DAVIS—Of changing the existing law on the subject, so as to allow the officers of the 131st regiment to hold their trainings at Lynchburg.

By Mr. PORTER—Of amending an act providing for the repair of bridges and roads in the counties of Brooke and Hancock.

By Mr. MALLORY—Of refunding a certain sum of money to Joseph W. Harper, of Dinwiddie.

By Mr. NELSON—Of allowing commissions and remitting damages to the sheriff of Fluvanna.

By Mr. FRIEND—Of amending the 29th section of chapter 184 of the Code of 1848.

By Mr. MILLER of S.—Of refunding to David Kipps taxes erroneously paid.

By Mr. DUCKWALL—Of so changing the present law prescribing punishment for petit larceny, as to authorize courts and juries to sentence such convicts to labor on the public works.

By Mr. HAYMOND—Of providing by law that writs shall hereafter be made returnable to quarterly courts instead of monthly rules.

THE JAMES RIVER AND KANAWHA CANAL.

On motion of Mr. HUNT, the following resolution, offered by him on the 7th instant and then laid on the table, was taken up and adopted:

Resolved, That the Committee of Roads and Internal Navigation be requested to lay before this House such proof, if any, of the ability of the firm of Bellet des Minieres, Bros & Co., to execute their contract made in August last for the purchase and completion of the James River and Kanawha Canal.

THE COVINGTON AND OHIO RAILROAD.

A bill for the partial suspension of the sale of State bonds, and to provide for the completion of the contracts lately made on the Covington and Ohio Railroad, came up on its second reading.

Mr. CAPERTON moved that the bill be advanced to its engrossment.

Mr. McKENZIE desired to amend the bill by striking out the words, "but no new or additional subscriptions shall be made to any joint Stock Company." He said he did not desire to put any obstacles in the way of the friends of the Covington and Ohio Railroad. It was no doubt proper that relief to the contractors should be granted by an issue of $500,000 in Treasury notes in lieu of that amount of State stock; that it was necessary that this great work should be completed to the White Sulphur Springs at the earliest possible day; that the present state of affairs was brought about, not by the contractors upon the work, who, in making their contracts, estimated the value of State securities at $90 or $95, but a gloom had come over Virginia, as well as over the whole Union, by the political troubles of the day. He hoped for better times, and that the Commonwealth would soon be relieved of her existing embarrassment, if our hopes from the efforts of the Peace Congress prevailed. This being so, he predicted a rapid advance in State securities. Until then, it was proper and necessary to pass this bill; at the same time, it was but justice to other State works that they should not be suspended until 1st December next.

Mr. HAYMOND opposed the striking out, and entered into an argument of considerable length to sustain his approbation of the bill as it stands.

Mr. CAPERTON urged the advantages which in his judgement would result from the passage of the bill in its present form.

After a protracted debate, Mr. RIVES moved the indefinite postponement of the whole subject.

Mr. MARTIN of Henry, moved to amend the motion to postpone by laying the bill and proposed amendment on the table, with the understanding that he would call them up to-day.

Mr. RIVES withdrew his motion to postpone, and the motion to lay on the table prevailed.

On motion the House adjourned.

THE COST OF BOMBARDING.—A letter from Charleston to the New Orleans *Delta* gives the following item of the expense to be incurred in the siege of Fort Sumter:

Every gun fired from Fort Sumter costs, on an average, thirteen dollars. Every gun fired by the State will be an average expenditure of nine dollars. A prominent officer of Fort Moultrie informs me that, by a close calculation, it has been ascertained that when its batteries open the cost per diem to the State, at that fort alone, will exceed $15,000. Pretty heavy, that. But this is the surest way of mastering the fort, and we had better spend money than lives in its acqusition.

HOTEL TO BE CLOSED.—The Philadelphia *American* states that after the 1st proximo the Girard House will be closed. The lease, having still more than a year to run, has been transferred to Mr. Stevens, of the Continental, for the sum of $30,000. After the 1st of March it will be closed, and used only to colonize guests should the Continental overflow.

TERRIBLE WEATHER IN ENGLAND.—During a recent terrific snow storm in England, forty of the laborers on the Rosedale railway, driven from the works by the severity of the weather, sought shelter in the Esklitt huts, on a bleak Yorkshire moor, where they were snowed in, and over forty-eight hours elapsed before they were dug out, almost exhausted with cold and hunger.

COLONEL DRINKARD—TORTUGAS.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 14.—I hear that Colonel Drinkard chief clerk of the War Department, has been removed and that Mr. Potts, former chief clerk, has been appointed.

Reinforcements have left to-day for Tortugas.

VIRGINIA STATE CONVENTION.

FRIDAY, Feb. 15, 1861.

The Convention was called to order at 12 o'clock.

Prayer by the Rev. Dr. Duncan, of the Methodist Church.

The PRESIDENT announced that the first business in order was the

ELECTION OF SECOND DOOR KEEPER.

The following nominations were then made:

Mr. FORBES nominated J. J. Winn, of Albemarle; Mr. McCOMAS nominated H. S. Coleman, of Stafford; Mr. GREGORY nominated Roscoe Burke, of King William; Mr. TREDWAY nominated S. H. Jeter, of Richmond city; Mr. SPEED nominated W. T. Leake, of Goochland; Mr. J. H. COX nominated Wm. Welch, of Chesterfield; and Mr. MONTAGUE nominated Joseph Tompkins, of Chesterfield.

The roll was then called with the following result: For Mr Jeter 35; for Mr. Leake 34; for Mr. Welch 26; for Mr. Coleman 26; for all others 16.

No person having received a majority, Mr. MORTON moved that all the candidates except the three highest be dropped. Agreed to.

The roll was then again called, with the following result: For Mr. Leake 46; for Mr. Jeter 40; for Mr. Welch 31; for Mr. Coleman 27.

There being no election, Mr. WISE arose and said that the occupation of the time of the Convention in the election of a Doorkeeper was like "fiddling while Rome was on fire." He would, therefore, move that the rules be suspended with the view of declaring one of the candidates, he did not care which, duly elected. The motion was disagreed to.

Mr. C. B. CONRAD then moved that the plurality rule be adopted for the next ballot.

Mr. BRANCH opposed the motion, and it was rejected.

The roll was again called, (Mr. Coleman's name being dropped,) and it appearing that neither candidate had received a majority, several members changed their votes in favor of Mr. Leake, and as that gentlemen thus obtained a majority of the votes cast, he was declared to be duly elected Second Doorkeeper. The vote was recorded as follows: For Mr. Leake 79, for Mr. Jeter 42, and for Mr. Welch 24.

THE COMMISSIONERS FROM THE SOUTH.

Mr. WM. BALLARD PRESTON, from the committee appointed yesterday, presented the following report:

The Committee appointed by the Convention to wait upon the Commissioners from the States of South Carolina, Georgia, and Mississippi, to invite them to accept seats on the floor of this Convention, and inform them that the Convention would receive any messages from them, respectively, at such time and in such form as they might choose, respectfully report:

That the Committee waited upon the gentlemen named in the resolution yesterday evening, and stated to them, as directed, the purport of the visit. The Commissioners expressed their grateful sense of the courtesy shewn to them personally, and the honorable consideration of their mission, and accepted the tender of seats upon this floor, (which they now occupy,) and said that if it should suit the convenience of the Convention, they desired to address it orally on Monday next—all of which they requested the Committee to communicate to the Convention.

ADMISSION OF REPORTERS.

On motion of Mr. TREDWAY, it was

Resolved, That the editors of newspapers, published in the city of Richmond, and reporters for such papers, be admitted to seats in the Convention, under the direction of the President.

COMMITTEE OF ELECTIONS.

On motion of Mr. HAYMOND, it was

Resolved, That the President of the Convention appoint a Committee of elections, consisting of thirteen members, to whom shall be referred the returns of delegates and all matters relating to contests for seats in the Convention.

RULES FOR THE CONVENTION.

Resolved, That the rules of the Virginia Convention of 1850, so far as they are applicable, be adopted for the government of this Convention, and that 200 copies of the same be printed for the use of this body.

PROPOSED CHANGE OF HALL.

Mr. SPEED offered a resolution to provide for a change of the place of meeting of the Convention, which,

On motion of Mr. WOODS, was indefinitely postponed.

FEDERAL RELATIONS.

Mr. CONRAD, of Jefferson, offered a resolution for the appointment of a Committee on Federal Relation which elicited some debate.

Mr. WISE objected to the resolution because it, (the committee) would be the monopolists of all determinate action on the subjects referred to them. This was not the time to submit to such arbitrary power. (Applause.)

Mr. CARLILE said that if the applause in the gallery was renewed, he would be constrained to follow the illustrious example of Senator Mason, and move that the gallery be cleared.

Mr. WISE hoped that the gentleman from Harrison (Mr. Carlile,) would imitate that Senator, so far as to try with him to save the country. (Great applause.)

Mr. CARLILE then moved that the galleries (except the one occupied by the ladies) be cleared, but on the appeal of Mr. MACFARLAND, withdrew the motion.

After further remarks by Messrs. WISE, CLEMENS, and CONRAD, the resolution was modified, and then adopted as follows:

Resolved, That a Committtee, to consist of twenty-one Delegates, selected from the different sections of the State, to be termed the "Committee on Federal Relations, be appointed by the President. To said committee all resolutions touching federal relations, which may be offered in Convention, shall be referred without debate other than that the member offering the proposition may explain the object thereof, and any member may object to the same, and assign his reasons therefor within the limits of thirty minutes of time; and it shall be the duty of the Committee, from time to time, to report upon the same to the Convention for its action.

THE TEMPORARY SECRETARY.

On motion of Mr. GRAY, it was

Resolved, That the thanks of this body be tendered to Wm. F. Gordon, Jr., Esq., Clerk of the House of Delegates, for the handsome manner in which he has discharged the duties of temporary Secretary of the Virginia Convention.

THE PEACE CONGRESS.

Mr. WILSON offered the following resolution which was laid over under the rules:

Resolved, That the Virginia Commissioners to the Peace Conference now in session in the City of Washington, be respectfully requested to report to this body at their earliest convenience, whether in their opinion any result acceptable to Virginia may be expected from the deliberations of their body,

ELECTION OF PRINTER.

On motion of Mr. JOHNSON, the Convention proceeded to the election of Printer.

Mr. JOHNSON nominated Mr. WYATT M. ELLIOTT, of Richmond city, and no other nomination being made, the vote was taken and Mr. Elliott was unanimously elected.

On motion of Mr. HAYMOND, it was

Resolved, That the Printer to this Convention receive the same pay for his services as the Printer to the House of Delegates, for similar work.

APPOINTMENT OF PAGES.

The PRESIDENT announced that he had appointed the following Pages, out of a large number of applicants:—William M. Talman, Edward Gay, August Rosen, and Arthur Flegen.

INVITATION FROM THE Y. M. C. A.

The PRESIDENT presented an invitation from the Young Men's Christian Association to visit the Library and Reading Rooms of the Association.

CONTESTED ELECTION.

Mr. KENT presented the petition of Mr. B. D. Lane, contesting the election of Mr. John D. Sharp, the delegate returned from Lee county. Referred to the Committee on Elections.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. WISE arose to vindicate himself from accusations that had been bandied about in this city and Washington. He then enquired if Mr. Stuart, one of the delegates from Augusta, was present.

Mr. STUART responded that he was present.

Mr. WISE then proceeded to say that he had been in retirement for some time past, and had not interfered in public concerns—not even meddling with the election which brought him to a seat in this Convention. While at home, sorrowing and suffering, he heard the report that he was heading a revolutionary party to commit all sorts of outrages at Washington. He had been written to by friends in the North, who informed him that they could not convince men he was not at the city of Washington, in disguise, or in the fastnesses of Harpers' Ferry. He could tell them that if he had been so disposed, he could have sent 20,000 barrels of gunpowder to South Carolina, and if anything could have induced him to do so, it would have been this slander upon his reputation.

Mr. W. then sent to the Clerk's table a preamble and resolution offered some time since in the Senate of Virginia, by Mr. Stuart, denouncing the reported design of a descent upon Washington, by certain "rash and ill-advised" cititizens of Virginia.

After the paper was read by the Clerk, Mr. WISE asked if Mr. STUART included him among the persons referred to.

Mr. STUART said he had no hesitation in declaring that he never dreamed for a moment that the gentleman from Princess Anne (Mr. Wise) was implicated in the reported conspiracy. It was a matter of notoriety known to all, that "rash and ill-advised persons," among whom he did not include Mr. Wise, were reported to have contemplated an attack upon Washington. He (Mr. S.) received private letters which assured him that these reports had obtained a lodgment in the public mind, and that the consequences might be disastrous. He, therefore, felt it to be his duty, as a member of the Senate of Virginia, to offer that resolution. He took pleasure in acquitting entirely the gentleman from Princess Anne, of any participation or any belief that he had any participation in the reported designs.

Mr. WISE thanked the gentleman for his satisfactory explanation. If there had been any foundation for the charge contained in the resolution, an investigation should have been ordered. That course was pursued at Washington, and they found no evidence of the fact. Mr. W. then read a letter from Messrs Jno. A. Harman and Jno. D. Imboden, of Staunton, addressed to Senator Beverly Douglas, certifying that they had a conversation with Mr. Stuart, at the Exchange Hotel, in which he declared that he had information that one of the first acts of the Convention would be to evict the present Governor and instal the Ex Governor (Wise,) etc. Mr. Wise said that so far as he was concerned, there was not the least shadow of foundation for the statement, and he was compelled to ask the Senator (Mr. STUART,) for the facts as he understood them.

Mr STUART replied that the information in the letter was an entire mistake. He never had, nor professed to have, any such information, except as an *on dit* which was current in the rotunda of the Exchange Hotel, and he may have repeated it to those gentlemen, in a casual conversation. He never believed that the gentleman from Princess Anne would lend himself to any such purpose.

Mr. WISE said he was very happy to meet the gentleman here, and to shake hands with him. He then proceeded to remark that he may have missed his destiny. If he had this gubernatorial term, he would have preferred it to the last. He would rather have command of the military forces of Virginia now than in the John Brown raid. He thanked God that he was of hot blood. He believed that the aphorism of Andrew Jackson is truth: "By the Eternal God, there is policy in rashness." He (W.) never did a rash thing without calculation, and the more sudden the act, the more he calculated.

When he was compelled to take a revolutionary stand, and God forbid that he should have to take it, it shall be such a stand as his father bid him take—open and above board defying the halter and the sword. In concluding, Mr. WISE said that if Virginia failed to resist the encroachments of Vandal Black Republicanism, he would rush to some other State, and bid her come and help his mother. He would do all he could to save, and then to fight if he could not save.

On motion of Mr. MONTAGUE, the Convention adjourned.

COLOGNE.—Genuine Farina Cologne, of the famous 4711 brand, in long bottles, cheaper than ever, sold in Richmond, at
ED. T. ROBINSON, Drug Store,
4th and Franklin.
fe8

Progress of the Revolution.

The majority of the Legislative Committee of Michigan which has had under consideration the question of repealing the Personal Liberty bill, now in force in that State, reports that the law is constitutional, and that there is no occasion for striking it from the Statute Book.

Governor Perry, of Florida, sent in a message to the State Legislature February 2. He informed that body that, like the Egyptians of old, the United States were hardening their hearts against the seceding States to deny them the privilege of "going out." To establish this position he cites the recent course of President Buchanan in sending troops to reinforce the Southern forts, and the action of the Legislatures of the Free States in pledging men and money to sustain him. The troops of Florida are under arms at Pensacola, and Governor Perry calls upon the Legislature to provide means to keep them there. Preparation, he says, must be made for war.

Mr. Seward is said to be uneasy at the tone of Mr. Lincoln's Indianapolis speech, and the position taken by Mr. Chase, with that of the New England Republicans, in the Peace Congress.

It is rumored that Secretary Toucey's premature acceptance of the resignation of officers at Pensacola is to be inquired into with other matters, showing complicity with Secessionists.

The United States revenue-cutter *Harriet Lane* is to be temporarily converted into a man-of-war. She is receiving at the Brooklyn navy yard a new and formidable armament. Four thirty-three hundred weight guns, one twelve-pound howitzer, and a quantity of shot and shell will be put on board of her, together with a marine guard.

The Pennsylvania Legislature proposes to pay the Commissioners to the Peace Conference $8 per day, and the same mileage that Congressmen receive.

The Legislature of New Mexico has passed an act for the election of delegates to form a State Constitution, which is to be held in May next. The delegates are to meet in June to discharge the duties which will thus be imposed upon them, and the Constitution they form is afterward to be submitted to the people, for ratification or rejection, at a general election to be held in September.

J. W. Mosely and Colonel S. Piercy Ellis, of Louisiana, A. B. Jordan, of Virginia, and J. B. Ezel, and —— Yates, of South Carolina, clerks in the Census Bureau, at Washington, and W. J. Stowers, J. A. Barksdale, J. W. Pullian, H. C. Worthington and H. A. Kincannon, of Mississippi, H. Allen, and E. M. Harrold, of Georgia, clerks in the General Land Office, have tendered their resignation, and in most cases departed for their homes.

Letters from Mobile of the 8th instant state that there were then garrisoning Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines about four hundred State troops, who are relieved every ten days.

The ammunition for the South, seized by the New York police, on Wednesday, consisted of a box containing 10,000 Sharpe's rifle primers, or caps, and another containing 8,000 ball cartridges, ready made up for use. They were destined for Savannah. During the day, Mr. Lamar called upon the superintendent of police, and demanded the ten cases of Georgia muskets, which are still detained, but the superintendent said he would not deliver them except upon a legal process.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE.

It was announced yesterday morning that the committee of one from each State, appointed by the Peace Conference to report a plan of adjustment of our national troubles, had, after a protracted session, lasting nearly to 12 o'clock on Wednesday night, adopted, by a decisive vote, the main features of the plan introduced by the Hon. James Guthrie, of Kentucky.

This plan, published in the *Whig* a few days ago, embraces the principal features of the Crittenden resolutions. It has, however, been amended in some particulars by the committee, and requires a vote of three-fourths of all the Senators for the future acquisition of territory. Whether the report of the committee will be adopted by the conference, and, if adopted by them, whether it can receive the sanction of both branches of Congress, are questions yet to be determined.

The Washington correspondent of the Baltimore *Sun*, dated the 14th, says:

The committee of the Peace Conference will probably report at noon to-morrow. The votes taken in the committee last night show that the Guthrie project of adjustment has more strength than any other. The anti-compromise republican members of the conference are so much alarmed by the prospect of some arrangement that they have taken steps to bring a Michigan delegation here, and thus it is expected to produce a tie in the convention and prevent any action on the subject before it.

The Southern border State delegates are much discouraged by the obstinate opposition which their efforts for conciliation meet from their northern colleagues, and from nearly all the republican members of Congress.—Mr. Lincoln's Indianopolis speech, together with his recent declarations to individuals, in opposition to compromise and in favor of force, have done much already to defeat any effort for compromise.

It is stated that Mr. Guthrie does not consider the action of the committee of the Peace Convention as altogether squaring with his original proposition, and fears for ultimate harmonious action. I must say, however, that the members of the committee generally consider their action as substantially endorsing the Kentucky programme.

THE PROVISIONAL CAPITAL OF THE NEW CONFEDERACY.

The city of Montgomery, the capital of Alabama, has assumed such a sudden importance as the capital of the Southern Confederacy, and the seat of the Federal operations of the new Government, that we give below a brief sketch of its locality and surroundings. It is situated on the left bank of the Alabama river, 331 miles by water from Mobile, and is 839 miles from Washington, D. C. It is the second city in the State in respect to trade and population, and is one of the most flourishing inland towns of the Southern States, possessing great facilities for communication with the surrounding country. For steamship navigation the Alabama river is one of the best in the Union, the largest steamers ascending to this point from Mobile. The city is also the western termination of the Montgomery and West Point Railroad. It contains several extensive iron foundries, mills, factories, large warehouses, numerous elegant stores and private residences. The cotton shipped at this place annually amounts to about one hundred thousand bales. The public records were removed from Tuscaloosa to Montgomery in November, 1847. The State House was destroyed by fire in 1849, and another one was erected on the same site in 1851. The present population of the city is not far from 16,000, and it is probable that, with all its natural advantages, the fact of its present selection as the Southern capital will soon place it in the first rank of Southern cities.

A SCENE IN THE ALABAMA LEGISLATURE.

An interesting incident transpired in the Lower House of the Legislature of Alabama on February 2. Mr. Clitherall, in the course of his remarks denouncing the Stay law, just passed by the Legislature, took occasion to say that, had he supposed such a measure would become a law, he should have preferred to live for four years under Mr. Lincoln's rule. This elicited a hiss from some member, and Mr. Clitherall retorted by observing that if the gentleman who hissed would show himself, he would put his mouth in such a condition that he would not repeat the operation for a week to come. Thereupon Mr. George G. Henry, of Mobile, arose from his seat, and stated that he was the sibilant individual, and that he held himself responsible for the method in which he had disapproved of Mr. Clitherall's remark. The next moment he was dodging an inkstand, which that gentleman launched at his head. As the combatants were about coming to close quarters, the bystanders separated them.

A NEW PHASE OF DISUNION.

The Cincinnati Gazette states, on what it considers reliable authority, that there are agents of the Gulf States in that city, endeavoring to create a sentiment amongst business men favorable to the establishment of a Confederacy composed of Southern and Northwestern States. A well-known leader among the Democracy has been approached, within the past two or three days, by these agents, with a view of obtaining his influence, but he declined having anything to do with so traitorous a scheme, as he is a staunch Union man. The object is to make free trade the basis of the Confederacy, and to cut off New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and all the New England States, which are wedded to a protective tariff. These Southern gentlemen state that there are agents of the Gulf States throughout all the Northwestern States, who are making similar overtures, and that it is their aim to spring the issue soon among the citizens of these States. It is further averred that they have purchased the acquiescence of a daily paper of Cincinnati, which, at the right moment, will proclaim the scheme, and offer it to the people of the West as the only means left to secure peace.

THE POSITION OF CALIFORNIA.

The California journals notice the startling political events in this quarter, and Gov. Downey closes his message with a patriotic examination of federal relations.—He says:—

Our vast seaboard unprotected requires the fostering care of a powerful maritime nation, such as the American Union has become. They desire to remain in the Union, and grow with its growth, and strengthen with its strength, and while anything exists worthy of being called an American Union, I mistake much if the people of California will not cling to it with a patriotic devotion worthy of men who can appreciate the blessings of self government. While California will thus cling to the Union, she will expect justice from her sister States, each to the other, as she, confident in her resources, and justly proud of her vast domain, her unparalleled mineral wealth, her commercial position, her unsurpassed fertility of soil, and geniality of climate, feels she would have the right to, and would demand, in the event of encroachments being attempted to her injury.

Having suggested the steps that the Northern States, which have passed, through their Legislatures, unfriendly acts towards the South, should take toward effecting an amicable adjustment of the existing differences, the South should be satisfied with this, and the entire removal of the slavery question from the halls of Congress. Let the people of the Territories alone settle the question of domestic slavery within their borders, and be admitted into the Union with or without a slavery clause in their Constitution. The precise time at which the pe ple of a Territory should be enabled to decide this question can be settled by the act of compromise itself. The question certainly is not of sufficient importance to cause a dissolution of the Union; and although I, in common with a very large proportion of the people North and South, as manifested by the recent election, have always believed that the people, at all periods of their existence, have control of this subject, yet an abstract question like this should not for one moment be placed in comparison with the greatest of all earthly blessings, the preservation of the Union of the American States, and that Constitution which has secured to us such a meed of civil and religious liberty, as never before, in ancient or modern times, has been vouchsafed to man!

MR. SEGAR AND FORTRESS MONROE.

To the Editor of the Whig:

In your issue of the 8th inst., we saw a letter from the Representative of this Legislative District, Joseph Segar, Esq., which contained statements so much at variance with our understanding of the defenses at Fort Monroe, as to induce the conviction that his easy credulity had led him into the error of characterizing "public rumors," touching recent movements at that port as mere "leather and prunella."

Under this impression, many of the undersigned, in most instances, *without preconcerted agreement*, visited "Fortress Monroe," and are prepared to state, that while there are but "three pieces of ordnance *pointed inland*," there are *thirteen mounted upon the land side*, which command Hampton and the adjacent country, and can be directed at the "bosom of Virginia," at *a moment's notice.* These guns are thirty-two pounders, and are exclusive of the "flank" pieces of which he speaks.

It was further observed that but *five* platforms on the *land side* were *vacant* whilst there is a much larger number vacant *towards the water.* It may be here remarked that none of the guns above alluded to have a "sweep of 180°"

The undersigned are also informed, upon what they believe unimpeachable testimony, that these guns have been recently mounted, (since 13th Jan., '61,) and the ramparts bears corroborative evidence of this statement.

It is also stated, upon authority equally reliable, that guns have *never* been mounted upon the *land side before* — but the moat has been *kept filled with water*, since the 15th January—that guns have been mounted in the guard rooms to command the main gate entrance, and that one, at least, of the bridges (if not two) is provided with a draw, which is raised *every* night, at *retreat*, (sundown.) The housings have also been removed from every gun on the parapet, on which sentries are stationed and *cry the hour* during the entire night.

As to the statement that "the mounting and dismounting, and moving of heavy guns are a *necessary* part of artillery practice, we have only to reply that it is usual in some cases to dismount and remount *only a few guns at a time, and on the same platform*, and not to remove them to distant portions of the parapet.

These facts are stated with no design to charge Mr. Segar with an intentional suppression of the truth, or to add to the prevalent excitement, but simply to correct important errors which are well calculated to mislead, and to show the *animus* of the "powers that be."

The public can now determine whether "nothing has been done, more than is *ordinarily* done and nothing more than is, *at all times, usual and proper* at a military fort."

Respectfully,

John B. Cary,	Joseph Phillips,
Geo. W. Hope,	Wm. Ham,
Ro. A. Armistead,	John Gammel,
G. W. Semple,	Richard Hope,
J. L. Joynes.	W. R. Vaughan,
Samuel J. White,	R. H. Vaughan,

Hampton, Va., Feb. 11th, 1861.

Enquirer and Examiner please copy.

IMPORTANT FROM FORTS PICKENS AND SUMTER.

FORT PICKENS NOT YET REINFORCED—THREATENED ATTACK BY TWELVE HUNDRED MEN—THE BROOKLYN, SABINE, ST. LOUIS, MACEDONIAN AND WYANDOT OFF THE HARBOR.

Washington, Feb. 14, 1861.

Lieut. Gilman, one of the officers in command of Fort Pickens, arrived here this evening with despatches from Lieutenant Slemmer and the commander of vessels off Pensacola to the government. He left Pensacola on Saturday evening, having received a passport from Major Chase, who is in command of the Florida troops.—He says the following vessels are off the harbor:—The Brooklyn, Sabine, St. Louis, Macedonian and Wyandot. The Brooklyn did not land her supplies for Fort Pickens, Lieut. Slemmer having notified them that he had ample supplies for three months.

There are twelve hundred troops at Pensacola, and they are threatening every hour to make an attack on Fort Pickens. It is all that Major Chase and others in command can do to restrain them.

Lieutenant Gilman says he would not be surprised if an attack was made at any moment, and it is very probable, owing to the limited number in the fort, that they would take it before the Brooklyn could throw her troops into the fort. If they take it at all, he says, they can take it in thirty or forty minutes; but there will be fearful loss of life even at that. The health of the officers and men on board of the vessels is good. Lieutenants Gilman and Slemmer are the only officers who took and are now in command of Fort Pickens.

Key West, Feb. 6, 1861.

The sloop-of-war Macedonian, Commander Glynn, having communicated with Fort Jefferson, sailed from that station on the 9d inst., for Pensacola.

The steam sloop Brooklyn, Capt. Walker, from this port the 31st inst., arrived at Tortugas the 1st and landed a large quantity of ordnance stores and guns for Fort Jefferson, and sailed for Pensacola on the 2d.

Capt. M. C. Meigs, U. S. Engineer, arrived at this place the evening of the 5th from Fort Jefferson. He has chartered the brig Alpine, Capt. Latham, to take some of the heavy guns not in use at Fort Taylor to Fort Jefferson. The armament will leave here on the 7th.

The U. S. steamer Crusader, Capt. Maffit, is now under orders for New York, and will sail as soon as the steamship Atlantic arrives from New Orleans.

The United States schooner Florida, Lieut. Pickering, U. S. N., commanding, sails this evening for Havana, with despatches for Washington, to go forward in the De Soto.

CONTINUED PREPARATIONS FOR THE ATTACK ON FORT SUMTER.

Washington, Feb. 13, 1861.

The action of the Congress of the Confederate States of America at Montgomery, relative to fortifications in seceding States, does not seem to have retarded the movements of the South Carolina authorities towards Fort Sumter.

Letters from that fort received to-night from Captain Doubleday, one of the officers in command, report that the South Carolinians have erected an impregnable battery on Cummings' Point of railroad iron, and that a terrible fight can be made from that point. The strength of that position as it has now been made, and standing, as it does, five-eighths of a mile from Fort Sumter, will enable the South Carolinians to do great michief.

The work on Fort Moultrie has also been pushed forward rapidily, and its strength is now such as will withstand the guns on Fort Sumter successfully.

Great preparations were going on among the Carolinans, and every day gave them more certainty of success when the attack on Fort Sumter is made.

The troops in Fort Sumter continue in good health and spirits although very much annoyed by the South Carolina authorities.

THIRTY-SIXTH CONGRESS—Second Session.

Washington, Feb. 14.

SENATE.

Mr. Cameron presented several petitions asking Congress to stand by the constitution as it is. Also, other petitions in favor of the Crittenden resolutions.

Mr. Bingham presented to joint resolutions of the Legislature of Michigan, expressing adherence to the Union, and offering the military force of the State to the general government, and urging that no concessions be made to traitors. He said these resolutions were passed with great unanimity, and he thought they expressed the feelings of the people of the State of Michigan.

He said they would adhere to the constitution as it is, and had no sympathy with treason, or these who in the government took measures to destroy it. They hoped their Southern friends would yet come to see that the best waywas to submit to the beneficent rule of the government; but if they persisted in their efforts to destroy the Union then they must take the responsibility. Laid on the table.

Mr. Green, from the Committee on Territories, reported a bill to organize the Territory of Nevada and provide a government for the Territory of Dacotah.

Mr. Wilkinson presented a memorial of citizens of Minnesota in favor of the enforcement of the laws. He said they must go away from the commercial cities to the interior, to the agricultural districts of the country to learn the true sentiments of the people. He was opposed to making any compromise with traitors or with yielding the principles of the Republican party. It was the South and not the North which was threatening the stability of the Union.

The memorial was then read, and sets forth that certain States had rebelled against the government, seized forts and dock-yards, tarred and feathered citizens of the North, interrupted the free navigation of the Mississippi river, wherefore the petitioners pray that the laws may be enforced, the forts recaptured, traitors brought to trial, &c. The memorialists further pray that the Crittenden propositions shall not be adopted, nor any compromise made which will give extension to human slavery.

Mr. Rice, of Minnesota, presented another memorial of citizens of Minnesota in favor of compromise and conciliation proposed by the plans of Messrs. Crittenden or Rice. He thought his State was for peace and union, and a speedy settlement of national troubles.

Mr. Crittenden presented petitions from New Hampshire, Vermont and elsewhere, in favor of the Crittenden resolutions.

A large number of memorials in favor of the Crittenden propositions, the enforcement of the laws, &c., were presented.

Mr. Seward presented the memorial of the Democratic Convention of New York in favor of a settlement of existing difficulties.

The tariff bill was taken up, and Mr. Hunter opposed its provisions at length. The adhesion of Pennsylvania to the Republican party had imposed an obligation upon that party to pass this bill.

The tariff act of 1857 was adopted in order to reduce the revenue of the government, and by that means to keep down the expenses of its administration. The revenue act of 1857 had not disappointed the expectations of its friends. The crisis of 1857 and the political troubles since the presidential election had effected its operations, but the estimates of the Secretary of the Treasury as to its productive power had been in the main correct.

Mr. Hunter argued at length to show that the tariff now proposed would be most disastrous in its effects upon the country, and would do more harm to New York than if they were to shell it. The duty of 24 per cent. on iron would almost prohibit its importation. He went largely into details, and read statistics to sustain his views, which were decidedly hostile to the tariff.

Mr. Simmons replied to Mr. Hunter, defending the bill and the amendments of the committee.

The Senate then went into executive session, after which the Senate adjourned.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Mr. Pryor obtained leave to introduce, as a question of privilege, a resolution calling for the appointment of a committee of three to inquire into the truth of a statement made in the New York Times of certain fraudulent transactions on the part of certain members from the seceded States, in sending off books to said States after they had resigned their seats.

The resolution was passed.

The Pacific railroad bill came up in regular order of business, and the House proceeded to consider the Senate amendment proposing that a central road shall go via Fort Riley from the mouth of the Kansas river, and struck out the amendment by a vote of 95 yeas, 61 nays.

Mr. Howard, of Michigan, asked leave to present the report of the committee appointed to inquire concerning the existence in Washington of a secret organization to take possession of the federal capital, or to prevent the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln. The report is to the effect that in the opinion of the committee, such an organization has existed, but does not *now* exist.

Mr. Branch presented a minority report (himself constituting said minority) of the committee, and offering also a resolution, to the effect that the presence of a hostile force in our midst is impolitic and offensive, and may become destructive to the civil peace and liberty of the community, and it is the opinion of the House that the troops ought to be removed from the District of Columbia.

Mr. Kunkel said that the fact upon which such a committee was appointed was a calumny upon the States of Virginia and Maryland, and the statements of Governor Hicks, of Maryland, were but characteristic of the audacity of the man, who was not worthy to sit at the head of the chief magistracy of that noble State.

Mr. Webster, of Maryland, followed in defense of Gov. Hicks. He affirmed the course he had pursued in not calling the Legislature together, and in seeking to allay sectional strife. He endorsed him as a wise and upright officer, who had acted properly in all he had done.

Mr. Hughes, of Maryland, commenced to reply in an excited strain, but his voice was drowned in cries of "order, order," from the Republicans, and not a word that he said was audible.

Mr. Mallory, of Kentucky, moved to clear the galleries.

The Chair decided that Mr Hughes was not in order, as a motion to lay on the table was pending, which was not debatable.

The resolution was then tabled, yeas 135, nays 85, and the House adjourned.

THE SOUTHERN CONFEDERACY AWAITING MR. LINCOLN'S COURSE.

A correspondent of the Savannah *News*, who is attending the "Southern Congress," at Montgomery, writes as follows as to the probable policy of the new Southern Confederacy:

"From what I can gather, it will be the policy of the new government to preserve the *status quo* of affairs until the 4th of March, when the inauguration of Lincoln will enable him to indicate the course his administration will pursue towards the Southern Confederacy. The hope is not yet entirely relinquished that more rational councils may prevail at Washington, and that, "making a virtue of necessity," the Black Republicans will abandon their idea of coercion, and by a peaceful conciliatory policy endeavor to preserve all that their fanatical folly has not entirely lost to them—commercial relations with the South. It is probable that one of the first acts of the new government will be to send a commission to Washington to treat for a peaceable and equitable arrangement of matters between the two republics—the acknowledgment of our independence, the surrender of the forts, a fair division of the public property and of the public debt.

"Until we learn how our commissioners will be received, and whether the federal government is willing to treat for the peaceable and equitable adjustment of these matters, it would be unwise for us to take any steps that would be likely to precipitate hostilities. We should prepare for the worst while we hope for the best. As the moral sense of a very large portion of the North is on our side, we should do nothing rashly to forfeit our just claim to the fair judgment of that portion of our late confederates who are blameless for the causes which led to the disruption of the Union and forced the South to assume her present attitude towards the federal government, now in the hands of the Black Republicans. The cause of the South stands justified before the world;—prudence and forbearance will give her still higher claims to the respect and good will of all true men. Let us exhaust every honorable means for a peaceable settlement of the terms of our political separation with the free States—it will be time enough then to resort to the argument of arms, when God defend the right."

THE PRESIDENT ELECT AT STEUBENVILLE—HE MAKES ANOTHER SPEECH AND SAYS THAT THE MAJORITY MUST RULE.

Pittsburg, Feb. 14th.—The President elect and party left Columbus at 8 o'clock this morning. At Steubenville, Ohio, a beautiful demonstration took place on his arrival, some five thousand people being present to welcome him. A salute was fired, and Mr. Lincoln was formally welcomed by Judge Lloyd.

Mr. Lincoln responded briefly. He said he feared that the great confidence expected in his ability was unfounded. Indeed, I am sure the position to which I have been called is encompassed with great difficulties. I am sure, however, that nothing shall be wanting on my part, sustained by the American people and God's help. I believe the devotion of the people to the Constitution and the Union, equally great on both sides of the Ohio river. It is only a different understanding—only a dispute as to what are their rights.

If the majority should not rule, who should be the judge? When such a judge is found, we must all be bound by the decision. That judge is the majority of the American people. If not, then the minority must control. Would that be right, just or generous? Assuredly not.

He reiterated that the majority should rule, and if he adopted a wrong policy the opportunity to condemn him would occur in four years. Then I can be turned out and a better man with better views be put in my place.

REMOVAL.

WILLIAM IRA SMITH has removed to his
OLD STAND,
114 Main street,
where he will be pleased to see his old friends and patrons, as well as others who may be in want of
FINE AND WELL MADE CLOTHING. fe15

CORNS, BUNIONS, NAILS growing in the flesh, &c., instantaneously removed without the slightest pain, permitting the patient to walk immediately with ease and comfort. NOTICE. In reply to inquiries of several members of the Convention, strangers and others, Dr. SCHULTZ begs to say he is in the city, again only to attend to their pedal welfare. His stay will be only limited. It is important for all who really desire to enjoy the blessings of healthy tread, to make early application. Among the names appended to his numerous certificates, can be seen gladly acknowledging the benefit received: Wm. H. Macfarland, James Lyons, Jas A. Cowardin, Esq., Maj. P. H. Price, Col. Richardson, R. L. Andrews, M. D., C. R. Mason, Esq., Mrs. Robinson, the Misses Green, W. E. Hinton, &c &c.
☞ Office—Wall Street Hotel. Office hours from 9 A. M., to 4½ P. M. Ladies attended at their residence, if desired. fe16

RICHMOND FEMALE INSTITUTE.—The second half of the present session begins February 15th, and ends the last of June

The commencement of a new term presents a most favorable opportunity for the admission of new pupils.

Although our School is already somewhat fuller than usual, the extent of our arrangements readily enables us to receive a still larger number.

We have SIXTEEN Teachers, of ability and experience, nearly the same number of large and comfortable recitation rooms, and ample grounds for exercise.

Our BOARDING facilities are also excellent. Our course is extensive and complete, beginning with the lowest English studies of the Preparatory course to which special attention is given, and including the higher English, the Languages, Music and the Ornamental branches.

TERMS:
(For the Half Session, Payable in Advance.)

English, in Preparatory department	$15
English, in Collegiate department	25
French, or other Languages	10
Music on the Piano	25
Board, including everything	90

For other particulars, or for Catalogues, apply to
fe16 2w CHAS. H. WINSTON, President.

VIRGINIA—In the Circuit Court of the city of Richmond, January 9th, 1861:
N. S. Crandell, Plaintiff,
against
Charles Abernethy, Henry Collins, James Sullivan and Herman L. White, trading under the firm and style of Abernethy, Collins and Company; Linn Adams and A. R. Lyon, trading under the firm and style of Linn Adams & Co.; William Tupman, Pollis G. Weaver, William Richardson and John A. Shultz, partners, trading under the style of Weaver, Richardson & Co.; William McMurtrey, William Ira Smith, William H. Richardson, of Philadelphia, James M. Motley and John W. Johnson, partners trading under the style of Motley & Johnson, John M. Davies, Thomas M. Gopell and John M. Davies, Junior, partners trading under the firm and style of John M. Davies & Co., F. H. Smith and H. N. Peters, J. C. Groshong, Irving Hull, William S. Tupman and James R. Crenshaw and Beverly R. Wellford, Junior, trustees, Defendants.

By a decree entered in this cause on the 9th day of January, 1861, among other things, it was ordered "that one of the Commissioners of this Court state an account of the debts due by the said Tupman and Hull, classifying them according to the classification in the deed of trust to the defendants, James R. Crenshaw and Beverly R. Wellford, of the 21st March 1860, and that the said James R. Crenshaw and Beverly R. Wellford render before the said Commissioner an account of the entire trust fund which has come to their hands, and of all their transactions as trustees under the said deed, which accounts the said Commissioner will audit, state and settle, and report to the Court, with any matter specially stated deemed pertinent by himself, or required by either party to be so stated."

Commissioner's Office, Richmond, Feb. 15, 1861.
The parties interested are hereby notified that I have fixed on WEDNESDAY, the 20th day of March, 1861, at 10 o'clock A. M., at my office on 13th street, in the city of Richmond, to execute the foregoing decree.
fe16—law4w THOS. J. EVANS, Commissioner.

AMERICAN and SWEDE NAIL RODS.—In whole and half bundles, for sale by
fe12 JOHN N. GORDON & SON.

MEMBERS TO THE CONVENTION
Can Get at
SIMPSON & MILLER'S
Clothing Store, 119 Main St.,
A GOOD AND CHEAP SUIT OF CLOTHING,
FOR A SMALL AMOUNT OF MONEY.

FURNISHING GOODS, every variety and style, 119 Main St., opposite Mitchell & Tyler's. fe13 SIMPSON & MILLER.

100 BAGS PRIME RIO COFFEE—for sale by
fe13—1w WM. WALLACE SONS.

COPARTNERSHIP.
I HAVE this day associated with me, in the Merchant Tailoring and Ready Made Clothing Business, WM. G. GAREY, of Boydton, Mecklenburg, Co., Va., said Copartnership to date from July 1st, 1860. The business will hereafter be conducted under the name and style of Spence & Garey.

Grateful for the very liberal patronage I have received for the past 20 years would most respectfully ask a continuance of the same to the new concern. E. B. SPENCE,
jy31 No. 120 corner of Main and 13th Street

SUGAR.—75 bbls Refined Sugar, various grades, for sale by
fe15 JOHN N. GORDON & SON.

DISSOLUTION OF CO-PARTNERSHIP.
THE firm of RANDOLPH & PAGE expired on the 31st January, 1861, by the withdrawal of D. C. RANDOLPH, who has moved to the country.

They most cordially return their thanks for the liberal patronage bestowed on them by their very kind friends.

Either partner is authorised to close the business.
D. COUPLAND RANDOLPH,
fe1—3taw1m MANN PAGE.

NOTICE.
INTENDING to continue the COMMISSION BUSINESS, I most respectfully ask a continuance of the patronage bestowed on the late firm of RANDOLPH & PAGE, and hope by strict attention to merit the same.

My uncle, D. C. Randolph, who will probably be here often for the next few months, will aid me in my business.
fe1—3taw1m MANN PAGE.

CHAMPAGNE WINES IN HALF PINTS, of very superior quality, for sale by SELDEN & MILLER,
Jan. 31. Corner Pearl & Cary Streets.