

News of the Week.

XLTH CONGRESS—2ND SESSION.

Senate.—December 17.—Mr. Sherman, of Ohio, reported from the Finance Committee a bill for the funding of the National debt, and the conversion of United States notes. The bill provides for the issue of bonds to cover all outstanding obligations, payable in coin after forty years, and bearing six per cent. interest per annum. One sixth of the interest is to be reserved as a special fund, one-half of which is to be divided among the States, and the remainder applied to reduce the debt.

December 18.—Mr. Drake, of Mo., introduced a supplementary Reconstruction bill, which was referred. The Judiciary Committee reported that Senator Thomas, of Maryland, was entitled to his seat. The report was adopted. The bill to repeal the cotton tax was discussed. A message was received from the President relating to Gen. Hancock, recommending some public recognition of that officer's patriotism as evidenced in his order acknowledging the supremacy of the civil law.

December 19.—The House bill supplementary to the Reconstruction laws was referred. Mr. Sherman, of Ohio, presented a petition from Cincinnati for the protection of American citizens abroad. The Deficiency bill was passed, with an amendment that no newspapers or stationery shall be purchased for members of Congress.

December 20.—The bill to repeal the cotton tax was laid over.

House.—December 17.—Mr. McCormick, Representative elect from the Third Missouri District, was sworn in. Mr. Stevens asked consent to introduce a bill relating to reconstruction—enabling a majority of those voting to ratify the new Constitution, and appointing the Southern Representative; objected to. The bill to prevent the reinstatement of cashiered officers, except by consent of the Senate, was passed. General Grant's famous letter on the Stanton and Sheridan removals was received.

December 18.—The Secretary of State was directed to furnish information in regard to the alleged banishment of American whalers from the sea of Ochoak by Russian war vessels. The bill to furnish honorable discharges to persons relieved of the charge of desertion, and repeating the act disfranchising deserters, was reported and discussed. A message from the President, relating to General Hancock, was received and will be printed.

December 19.—In the House, Mr. Boyer, of Pennsylvania, asked leave to introduce a joint resolution of thanks to General Hancock, but objection was made. The Deficiency bill was considered and passed. Mr. Cleaver was sworn in as delegate of New Mexico. A resolution looking to the retention in service of the Veteran Reserves was adopted.

December 20.—The Deficiency bill was considered.

STATES AND TERRITORIES. New York.—The Coroner's inquest on the burning of the Second avenue tenement house, has resulted in committing Miller, the occupant of the first floor, (on suspicion of arson) to await the action of the Grand Jury, while the owner of the house is severely censured for not providing it with the necessary fire escape.

BY CUBA CABLE.

December 17th.—Havana.—Advices from St. Thomas, says, that up to the 17th inst., 500 shocks of earthquake have been felt. Divers were busily at work in the bay, and 200 packages were daily raised from the wreck of the steamer Columbian. Business was generally resumed, and no more failures are reported. Rents of corner lots were greatly increasing.

FOREIGN.

England.—Among recent "strikes" is a strike of Queen Victoria against the London butchers. She refuses to pay them for her establishment the large prices they have been exacting. This course, which was taken to benefit the poor, has already, it is said, produced a perceptible reduction in the price of meats in the markets of England.

Murders in England are reported to be, in proportion to the whole population, one in every 675,000; in Holland, one in 163,000; in the North German Bund, one in 100,000; in Austria, one in 77,000; in Spain, one in 4,000; and in the Papal States, one in 750.

Garibaldi.—The London Advertiser prints a letter from a lady of Florence, who vouches for Garibaldi's Christianity. A clergyman of the Church of England, it seems, is of opinion that, although some times, "when he was tired at night," the General may have put his hand thoughtlessly to some compromising assertions, he is one of the truest Christians living.

Denmark.—King Christian of Denmark has issued a proclamation announcing the cession of St. Thomas to the United States. There is a circumstantial report from Havana, that Spain has offered to sell Cuba for \$150,000,000 in gold; whereas, the N. Y. Tribune indignantly lets off the following: "How much does King Theodore want for Abyssinia? Is not Lapland for sale? Can't we manage to buy a tract of Greenland?" But Cuba is well worth our buying.

Australia.—Tall Trees.—We are in the habit of priding ourselves on the possession of the largest trees in the world, but recent researches in Australia have shown that although the thickness of our California giants may not be equalled, their height is considerably exceeded by a species of Eucalyptus, a vegetable form characteristic of Australia. Specimens of various heights have been measured, and the tallest actually subjected to this test gave an altitude of 480 feet; but another, having a circumference of 81 feet at a height of four feet from the ground, was estimated to be over 500 feet high.

The Eucalyptus tribe of Australian trees embraces a number of species of great economical value, as, while the timber is excellent, the growth is far more rapid than that of any others known, and their ability to resist the greatest drought, and even flourish in the most barren and arid regions. How far, as a form eminently Australian and Old World, the Eucalyptus would answer for growth in California and other comparatively rainless districts of America, can only be known by experiment.

St. Thomas.—The decision of the people of the Island of St. Thomas, by a popular vote to accept annexation to the United States, was announced, Dec. 6th. The prospective transfer of this island to the United States is said to be causing considerable excitement in Cuba. A correspondent of the New York Tribune, himself a Cuban, reports that the whole of the native population begins to be tired of Spanish rule, and the idea of an incorporation with the United States is very popular.

A DESIRABLE HOLIDAY PRESENT. There was a time—and not very long ago either—when Sewing Machines, with all their acknowledged utility were among the luxuries of social life. The few possessed them and expatiated upon their wonderful charms with tireless loquacity and dilated eyes, while the many looked upon them as marvels of scientific and inventive genius far beyond their reach.

"The Children's Hour" is a monthly illustrated magazine for the little ones. Edited by T. S. Arthur. Terms:—\$1.25 a year, in advance. 5 copies for \$5. 10 copies, and one to get-up of club, \$10. "The Children's Hour" and "Arthur's Home Magazine," one year for \$2.50.

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December 18th.—London.—An attempt was made to blow up a wall of Milbank jail, in which a number of Fenians are confined. No clew has yet been obtained to the guilty parties.

December 19th.—London.—In the explosion of New York, eight persons lost their lives.

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A PORTRAIT OF MR. GREELEY. The Publishers of the New York Tribune having received many inquiries from time to time for a good likeness of the editor, have made an arrangement with Messrs. Derby & Miller to furnish copies of Ritchie's engraving.

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