

Evening Telegraph

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1866.

The President's Message.

The President opens with a recognition of Congress as "the Congress of the United States." He alludes to the abatement of the pestilence which has visited some parts of our country; says that peace, order, tranquility, and civil authority have been formally declared to exist throughout the United States; that in all the States the civil authority is maintained by the people thereof; that the enforcement of the laws is no longer obstructed; and that the animosities engendered by the war are rapidly passing away.

He then alludes to the measures of "restoration" in the insurrectionary States instituted by the Executive, as set forth in his Message of December 4, 1865. Having progressed thus far, the Executive had nearly exhausted his constitutional authority in the promises, and it only remained for Congress to complete the work by the admission of Senators and Representatives from the restored States.

The President then proceeds to argue at length the question of the admission of "loyal" Senators and Representatives from these States. Ten States are now represented; the seats of fifty members of the House of Representatives and twenty Senators are vacant. Their admission would have done much to renew our relations as a people, and to remove causes of discontent on the part of those States; it would have accorded with the principle that taxation and representation should go hand-in-hand; it would have fulfilled those provisions of the Constitution designed to secure to the people of every State the right of representation in Congress.

The assumption that the existence of the States was terminated by the rebellion of their inhabitants, is said to be incompatible with the nature of our republican system, and with the avowed objects of the war. The functions of the States were not destroyed, but merely suspended, by the Rebellion. He again urges the admission of "loyal" Senators and Representatives, recapitulating the arguments therefor. Disloyal applicants may be returned to their constituents without admission. If, in the exact condition of these States at the present time, it is lawful to exclude them from representation, he does not see how the question will be altered by the efflux of time.

The President next drops a word of caution in regard to infractions of the Constitution, and the dangers of consolidation, quoting from Washington, Jefferson, and Jackson. This closes his remarks upon the great political topic of the times. There is no allusion to the Constitutional amendment, none to amnesty or suffrage, none to the New Orleans massacre, none to the late elections. His tone is perfectly respectful towards Congress and in every way unexceptionable.

In the remainder of the Message is taken up with an embodiment of the facts contained in the reports of the various Secretaries, and with comments thereon.

He rejoices at the exhibit of the condition of our financial affairs made by the Secretary of the Treasury, urges economy in expenditures, and a reduction of taxation, and says that the whole national debt can be paid off in the next twenty-five years.

He commends the condition of the army and navy, and urges early action upon the bill accepting League Island for naval purposes.

The postal service is in good condition, although there is a decrease of revenue in that department of one and one-fifth per cent., and an increase of expenditure of twelve per cent., over last year.

The beneficial workings of the Homestead law are commented on, and the necessity of more stringent safeguards in respect to lands granted for railroad purposes is suggested.

The progress of the Pacific Railroad is most gratifying, and gives promise of its completion within the time prescribed by Congress.

Such legislation as may be necessary for the preservation of the Mississippi levees is recommended; also, for the removal of obstructions to the navigation of that great river.

He recommends the passage of a law allowing the people of the District of Columbia to elect a Delegate to Congress, with the same rights and privileges as are now accorded to Delegates from the Territories.

The tone of the Message with regard to France is decidedly suggestive. The Emperor, it seems, not long since, determined to postpone the removal of the November contingent of French troops, as he had agreed with this country, with the avowed purpose of recalling them in a body in the spring.

Although this determination was not officially communicated to our Government, it at once took notice of it, and expressed its dissent therefrom.

The President hopes that France will reconsider the subject, and adopt some resolution in regard to the evacuation of Mexico which will conform as nearly as practicable with the existing engagement, and thus meet the just expectations of the United States. It is believed that, with the evacuation of Mexico by the expeditionary forces, no sub-

ject for serious differences between France and the United States would remain. The expressions of the Emperor and people of France warrant a hope that the traditional friendship between the two countries might, in that case, be renewed and permanently restored.

General Sherman's mission to Mexico is said to be to obtain such information as may be important to determine the course of the United States in re-establishing and maintaining proper intercourse with the republic of Mexico.

With regard to Great Britain, the President regrets that no considerable advance has been made towards a settlement of the differences between the two countries growing out of the depredations upon our commerce, and other trespasses of British subjects, during our late war. He excuses the delay, however, on account of the domestic condition of Great Britain, but adds that whatever might be the wishes of the two Governments, it is manifest that good-will and friendship between the two countries cannot be established until a reciprocity, in the practice of good faith and neutrality, shall be restored between the respective nations.

The Fenian invasion of Canada is alluded to, and in regard to the convicted prisoners now incarcerated there, the President says that, fully believing in the maxim of government, that severity of civil punishment for misguided persons who have engaged in revolutionary attempts which have disastrously failed, is unsound and unwise, such representations have been made to the British Government in behalf of the convicted persons, as, being sustained by an enlightened and humane judgment, will, it is hoped, induce in their cases an exercise of clemency, and a judicious amnesty to all who were engaged in the movement. He adds that he has regarded the expedition as not only political in its nature, but as also in a great measure foreign from the United States in its causes, character, and objects; and that, as long as the neutrality laws remain upon our statute-books, they should be faithfully executed, and if they operate harshly, unjustly, or oppressively, Congress alone can apply the remedy, by their modification or repeal.

With regard to the right of self-expropriation, the President says that, as "peace is now prevailing everywhere in Europe, the present seems to be a favorable time for an assertion by Congress of the principle, so long maintained by the Executive Department, that naturalization by one State fully exempts the native-born subject of any other State from the performance of military service under any foreign Government, so long as he does not voluntarily renounce its rights and benefits."

The President closes by saying that "our Government is now undergoing its most trying ordeal, and his earnest prayer is, that the peril may be successfully and finally passed without impairing its original strength and symmetry. The interests of the nation are best to be promoted by the revival of fraternal relations, the complete obliteration of our past differences, and the reinauguration of all the pursuits of peace. Directing our efforts to the early accomplishment of these great ends, let us endeavor to preserve harmony between the co-ordinate departments of the Government, that each in its proper sphere may cordially co-operate with the other in securing the maintenance of the Constitution, and the perpetuity of our free institutions."

The Message is well written, and while we cannot coincide with the President's views upon the subject of reconstruction, we are gratified with the moderation with which he sets them forth, and with the respectful tone which he maintains towards the "co-ordinate branches of the Government."

The Work before Congress.

AT noon to-day the gavel of Speaker Colfax called the House of Representatives to order, and the second session of the Thirty-ninth Congress commenced. It is in no spirit of exaggeration that we say that the duties devolving on that body are the most vitally important of any that have ever come before our National Legislature. The whole land has been ploughed up by the war, the old order of things has been overturned, and eighteen months of peace have utterly failed to arrange a new foundation. It is for this session to rectify the mistakes of the past and provide for enlightened progress in the future. It would be well if, in its efforts to improve, it avoid the rocks on which the good intentions of so many of its predecessors have been wrecked.

The most obvious advice which the Northern people give to their Representatives, and on the adoption of which rests all the hope of successful and efficient action, is to avoid speech-making. The past few months have afforded every man who had a speech prepared on any subject, an ample opportunity to "get it off" as many times as his ambition desired. All the ground of political arguments have been gone over again and again, and no set speech will tend to throw any more light on any subject. Remembering the adage, that "Speech is silver, silence is gold," let us return to a gold basis as soon as possible.

Having adopted this cardinal principle, a fair opportunity will be allowed for calm and dispassionate argument, and the preparation of such measures as the public welfare demands. It requires no spur to prick the sides of those intent to avenge political treachery, and remove from office all those who have purchased place at the sacrifice of principle. That such is the evident determination, the fixed purpose of the Congress of the nation, we are perfectly assured. So, also, in regard to the laws properly applicable to that

large territory which once was composed of the Southern Rebel States. Congress will, without doubt, make all needful regulations for the government of that section, and take such steps as will, indeed, make treason odious. That issue has been settled by the Northern people, and will be executed by their Representatives.

While, therefore, these important questions will, we doubt not, be well attended to, we have grave fears lest the excitement of this political work will so far distract attention as to cause them to lose sight of yet more important issues, which do not properly fall under the head of politics. We refer to the questions of finance and tariff. If there is an instrument which must be handled most delicately, that instrument is the circulating medium of a country. Any violent measure, whether for good or ill, will at once produce a bad effect. Gradual and careful change must be made where anything is wanting, and deliberation and financial skill must guide all who seek to control the world of commerce. Until the report of the Secretary of the Treasury is made public, we forbear to recommend such measures as we feel are necessary to the national welfare. We will, however, lay down but a cardinal doctrine on which we are to move. Contract gradually, fund immediately, and protect American industry. The insinuations thrown out by Mr. David A. Wells, lead us to distrust him and every bill which is framed by his sanction. He is willing to sacrifice Pennsylvania in order to aid New England. We direct the especial attention of our delegation to his measures, and feel sure that by timely watchfulness we can defeat any such combination. But we do most earnestly hope that the short time allowed for action will not be frittered away in speech-making, or so engrossed with other things as to lead to the neglect of our most important interests.

Although the present is the short session, there is no need of any hasty legislation. The assembling of the Fortieth Congress on the 4th of March will insure proper deliberation on all important questions. The power is in the hands of the Republican party. All of the glory of successful administration, and all of the responsibility of heedless legislation, will rest on them. If, through neglect, they allow the nation to be injured, they will be held strictly accountable. Let them so act that the people say, "Well done, good and faithful servants; the confidence we placed in your hands, you have guarded most sacredly."

Report of the Secretary of War.

THE report of Hon. Edwin M. Stanton, which we publish elsewhere, deals rather in statistics than opinions, but the figures given speak in language unmistakable of the energy with which the War Department has been conducted, and the wonderful spirit and resources of our nation. A people who can furnish on demand an army of a million and a half of men are indeed great, but still greater is the nation that can within a year receive back into its ranks of subjects an army of that size, and yet feel none of the tumults which have always attended the disbandment of a military force. The rapid increase of our martial force when needed is only equalled by the rapidity with which it was diminished when the emergency was passed. When the war terminated, on May 1, 1865, we had a force of 1,034,064 men. On the 1st of November, 1866, the number stood 11,042. Within eighteen months more than a million soldiers had become citizens, and yet no derangement of our civil polity was felt. That country may well be proud of her sons who, while invincible in war, can as easily adapt themselves to the requirements of peace. At present our total military force counts up 11,000 volunteers and 64,000 regulars—a grand total of 65,000 soldiers, where but two years ago 1,200,000 were employed.

In reference to the arms used in our service, the Secretary appointed a commission, who, after three months' investigation, have secured a weapon which we are assured is "better in all respects than the Prussian needle-gun, while its metallic ammunition is regarded as superior to the latter." This piece of information, together with the assurance that our fortifications are much strengthened, and that, although disbanded, an army of 1,000,000 men could be collected together at once if needed (an assertion made twice in the Report), will do more to keep peace with foreign powers than any of the cringing compromises favored by the Secretary of State.

The Secretary assures us that the Freedmen's Bureau is working energetically to educate the freedmen, and now 150,000 children attend its schools. On application of the States, rations have been, and will be, dealt out to paupers.

The estimates needed by the War Department for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1867, is \$25,205,660, while the Freedmen's Bureau asks \$3,830,300 as its share.

Such is the substance of the body of the Report, while the voluminous documents which accompany it give details, none of which attract much attention, except the Report of the General-in-Chief.

RELIGIOUS PROGRESS.—The Southern Presbyterian General Assembly, lately in session at Memphis, after a long and interesting debate on the relations of the freedmen to the Church, finally decided, by a unanimous vote, that they should be received into full fellowship in the Church, and on equal grounds, as brothers in Christ. Such a decision would have been impossible during the days of slavery. The idea of Christian fellowship with a valuable piece of property that you were about to sell on the auction-block to the highest bidder was simply absurd.

THE NATIONAL FINANCES.

Report of the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, for the Year 1866. TREASURY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, December 3, 1866.—In conformity with the requirements of law, the Secretary has the honor to make the following report:— In his report under date of the 4th of December 1865, the Secretary estimated, according to the data furnished him by this Department and by the other Departments, that the expenditures of the Government for the three quarters of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1866, would exceed the receipts \$113,194,947.20. The result was widely different. The receipts exceeded the estimates \$30,905,904.44; the expenditures fell short of the estimates \$204,629,265.30. The following statement exhibits the items of increase of receipts and decrease of expenditures in comparison with the estimates:—

Statement of the Estimated and Actual Receipts and Expenditures of the United States from October 1, 1865, to June 30, 1866.

RECEIPTS. Estimated. Actual. Excess of receipts. Customs, \$100,000,000.00; Internal Revenue, \$175,000,000.00; Miscellaneous, \$30,000,000.00; Direct tax, \$95,000,000.00; Cash balance Oct. 1, 1865, \$7,138,519.44.

EXPENDITURES. Estimated. Actual. Excess of expenditures. Civil service, \$22,000,000.00; Pension and Invalids, \$12,500,000.00; War Department, \$307,780,750.00; Navy, \$35,000,000.00; Interest on public debt, \$6,313,868.75.

The following is a statement of receipts and expenditures for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1866:— Receipts from customs, \$119,946,531.95; Receipts from internal revenue, \$175,000,000.00; Receipts from miscellaneous sources, \$30,905,904.44.

EXPENDITURES. For the Civil Service, \$22,000,000.00; For the War Department, \$307,780,750.00; For the Navy Department, \$35,000,000.00; For interest on the public debt, \$6,313,868.75.

RECAPITULATION. Estimated receipts, \$512,838,750.00; Actual receipts, \$530,852,446.39; Estimated expenditures, \$717,467,915.30; Actual expenditures, \$717,467,915.30.

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The following statement exhibits the items of increase and decrease of the public debt for the four months from June 30, 1865, to October 31, 1866:— Amount of public debt, June 30, 1865, \$1,131,544,111.15; Amount of public debt, Oct. 31, 1866, \$1,131,544,111.15.

Which decrease was caused as follows, by payments and increase of cash in Treasury:— Bonds, 6 per cent., act July 21, 1864, and April 1, 1865, \$14,500.00; Bonds, 6 per cent., act July 21, 1864, and April 1, 1865, \$14,500.00; Bonds, 6 per cent., act July 21, 1864, and April 1, 1865, \$14,500.00.

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