



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16, 1861.

WHAT IS CONGRESS ABOUT? Congress has now been in session about six weeks, and sees the Union dissolving piece by piece, but so far has not moved a single step to prevent its dissolution. They know that the President has neither power to coerce a sovereign State to remain in the Union nor to recognize her independence after she has resolved herself out of it; and yet they leave him to struggle with the great difficulty. They laugh at the impending calamity, or talk big and loud of treason, coercion, and so on, and still neglect or refuse to strengthen his arm to meet its rude and terrible shock. The constituents, too, of many of the members—perhaps of most of them—instead of thundering in the ears of their Representatives as they sleep at their posts, and waking them to a sense of their duty, employ their time in "curving Buchanan," as if he possessed not only executive, but also legislative and judicial powers, and could make laws for himself and for all mankind, and construe them to suit and meet any emergency. The Republican members have made patriotism give way to partisanship. They see the danger—they can't shut their eyes to it; but as it is a Democratic and not a Republican administration that has to grapple with it, they have set themselves down quietly at their desks and resolved to let the storm blow on. Having brewed disunion and political and financial ruin by electing LINCOLN, their wish now is to have civil war break out during Mr. BUCHANAN'S administration, so that they may impose upon the deluded voters who gave them the victory last fall, the false story that the Democrats are responsible for the deplorable condition of public affairs. In his Special Message, published in another column the President makes another appeal to Congress, to attend to its duty. We have reason, however, to fear that the appeal is still in vain.

In his Legislature on Tuesday last week, Edgar Cowan, Republican, of Westmoreland, was elected on the first ballot, U. S. Senator for six years, from the 4th of March next in the room of Hon. Wm. Bigler, whose term expires. The vote was as follows:—

Edgar Cowan (Republican) received 35 votes. Henry D. Foster (Dem.) 25. [In the Republican caucus for a candidate for Senator the principal candidates were Messrs. Cowan and Wilmore. Six ballots were had. Mr. Bougher fell into the ranks of Mr. Cowan on the second ballot and Mr. Bixler on the third. Mr. Killinger received one vote on the first ballot.] Hon. Eli Slier, State Treasurer, having resigned, to assume the position of Secretary of the Commonwealth under Governor Curtin, the Legislature elected, on Thursday Hon. Henry D. Moore, of Philadelphia, for the unexpired term.

CAUGHT NAPPING.—The opponents of General Cameron in the Republican party, were fooled awfully on the Senatorial question. He held out the bait to them of a short Senatorial term for one of their side of the house until he had his man triumphantly elected, and then he gallantly declines a seat in Mr. Lincoln's cabinet.

Mr. Cameron intends to make a statement of his reasons for declining Mr. Lincoln's offer of a place in the new Cabinet. The result will be a break in the Republican ranks in Pennsylvania.

Stirring events accumulate so rapidly that we have no room to make editorial comments. One starting report has scarcely come before others still more exciting crowd upon us. This is really a terrible crisis.

On Tuesday of last week, Mr. Thompson resigned his post as Secretary of the Interior. The despatch of reinforcements to Major Anderson at Fort Sumter, by the Star of the West, from New York, is the cause of this step on the part of Mr. Thompson. The President promptly accepted his resignation.

Mr. Thomas, of Maryland, who was recently appointed Secretary of the Treasury, in place of Mr. Cobb, has also resigned, and Gen. John A. Dix, late Post Master of New York city, has been appointed in his place.

The message of the Governor of Tennessee to the Legislature recommends that the question of calling a State convention be left to the people. He says that a remedy for the present evil exists only in constitutional amendments. On a refusal of the North to accede to such amendments, Tennessee would maintain her equality in or her independence out of the Union. He recommends the organization of the militia, and the purchase of arms.

The political crisis in England as being more serious than at first supposed, and was attracting much attention. The London Times, in a leader, says it thinks it quite possible that the problem of the democratic Republic may be solved by its overthrow in a few days, in a spirit of folly, selfishness, and short-sightedness.

Governor Curtin was inaugurated at Harrisburg, yesterday (Tuesday.)

MORE SECESSIONS.—The State Convention of Mississippi, on Wednesday, passed an ordinance of immediate secession from the Union, by a vote of 84 to 16. The Florida State Convention on Monday adopted a resolution, by a vote of 62 to 15, declaring the right of States to withdraw from the Union, and that the existing causes are such as to compel Florida to proceed to exercise that right. It is reported that the Governor of Florida has taken possession of the forts and other federal property of the State. Monday, Jan. 12.—The secession of Alabama has caused great rejoicing here. One hundred guns are being fired in honor of the event. Impromptu speeches are being made in all the prominent buildings. To-night the city will be illuminated and there will be a military parade. One hundred thousand dollars have been subscribed by the citizens for the defence of Mobile.

HOSTILE MOVEMENTS OF THE SECESSIONISTS.—From Louisiana we learn that all the State troops at New Orleans were under arms on Wednesday night, and that on Thursday detachments left the city to seize the United States Arsenal at Baton Rouge, Forts Jackson and St. Phillip, on the river below the city, and Fort Pike, on Lake Ponchartrain. New regiments of troops were being organized, and the greatest excitement everywhere prevailed. There is reason to believe that the authorities of Florida and Texas have by this time taken possession of the fortifications on their coasts. From North Carolina we have intelligence of the seizure of Forts Johnson and Caswell, on the night of the 8th inst., by the State troops.

SEWARD TO BE SECRETARY OF STATE.—The Albany Evening Journal announces by authority, that early in December Governor Seward was tendered by the President elect, and has accepted, the Secretaryship of State; and that on or before the fourth of March he will resign his seat in the Senate. So this matter is fixed.

Governor Letcher, in his message delivered last week to the Virginia Legislature, renews his proposition for a convention of the States, declares that Virginia must have the best guarantees before she can attach herself to either of the confederacies that may be formed, condemns the "hasty action of South Carolina, opposes a State convention at this time, proposes appeals by commissioners in all the New England States in favor of the repeal of the personal liberty bills, and insists on guarantees for the protection of the rights of slaveholders.

The Virginia House on Wednesday passed the first section of a bill for the calling of a State convention, designating the 4th of February for the meeting of delegates. In the Senate, a joint resolution was introduced to appoint a committee to represent to the President of the United States that in the judgment of the General Assembly of Virginia, any additional display of military power in the South will jeopard the tranquility of the Republic, and that the evacuation of Fort Sumter is the first step towards the restoration of peace and harmony. It is the opinion at Washington that Virginia will secede from the Union about the 20th of February. In order to meet contingencies growing out of secession, the Legislature have before them a resolution appropriating ten millions of dollars in defence of the State.

BEECHER MOBBED AT NEW HAVEN.—Rev. H. W. Beecher lectured at New Haven Friday night. He was hissed during his lecture, and when he came out a volley of rotten eggs was fired at his carriage. He drove off amid the groans of a large crowd, who afterwards followed him to his hotel and repeated the compliment of hearty groans.

The expenses of governing France amount to \$1,000,000 per day, including interest on public debt.—This is about \$0 per year to each inhabitant. The navy alone costs \$99,000,000 a year.

In one hundred and four counties of Georgia, seventy of the delegates elected are for immediate secession, twenty-nine for co-operation, and five divided.

CABINET COUNCIL ON CHARLESTON AFFAIRS.—WASHINGTON, Jan. 12.—There was a Cabinet meeting last night, which was continued up to a late hour.—The subject under consideration was the despatches brought by Lieut. Talbot, from Major Anderson. There is yet no reason to believe that anything further will be yielded to South Carolina. At the same time it is understood that Major Anderson reports that he needs no reinforcements to defend Fort Sumter.

Mayor Berritt and the Secretary of War have had a consultation to adopt measures to prevent the raising of armed military companies here which are unauthorized by the Government, and any such act be contemplated.

KANSAS TO SECEDE.—Acting Governor Beebe, in his message to the Kansas Legislature, in regard to National affairs, thinks the present distracted state of the country is owing to the aggressive policy of the "Republicans," and urges conciliation for the Union. But a resolution takes place, he trusts that Kansas will decline identification with either branch of the Union, but establish a separate and independent Government.

DISTANCE OF THE FORTS FROM CHARLESTON.—Fort Sumter is three and three-eighths miles from Charleston, one and one-eighths miles from Fort Moultrie, one and three-eighths miles from Fort Johnson, and two and five-eighths miles to Castle Pinckney. The last named fort is one mile from the town, and Fort Johnson is two and one-eighth miles from the town. These measurements are correct, being taken from the latest surveys made by the United States coast survey.

THE REVOLUTION.

The First Blow struck.—Attempt of the Star of the West to Land Troops at Fort Sumter.—Attack on the Steamer by the South Carolina Forces. The Charleston Courier of the 10th, says that at about half past six o'clock yesterday morning the steamer General Jackson discovered the steam-ship Star of the West and signaled the fact of her approach to the occupants of the battery on Morris Island. As soon as the signal was seen by those on guard there, Morris Island was astrir with men at their posts before the orders could be given them to prepare for action. They remained in anxious suspense, but ready for what they believed was sure to come—a volley from Fort Sumter. The Star of the West rounded the point, took the ship channel inside the bar, and proceeded straight forward "until opposite Morris Island, about three quarters of a mile from the battery. A ball was fired towards the bows of the steamer. The Star of the West displayed the stars and stripes. As soon as the flag was unfurled the fortification fired a succession of heavy shots. The vessel continued on her course with increased speed, but two shots taking effect upon her, she concluded to retire. Fort Moultrie fired a few shots at her, but she was out of their range. The damage done to the Star of the West is trifling, as only two out of seventeen shots took effect upon her.

Fort Sumter made no demonstration, except at the port-holes, where guns were run out bearing on Morris Island. After the firing, Major Anderson addressed a note to Governor Pickens, demanding to know if the firing was by the authority of the Government of that State, and notifying him that if it was in obedience to instructions and not piratically vended to pass within range of the guns of Fort Sumter. "In order," says Major Anderson, "to save the shedding of blood, I beg you will take due notice of my decision for the 'good of all concerned.'" Gov. Pickens replies that any attempt to send United States troops into Charleston, to reinforce Fort Sumter or to resume possession of the fortifications abandoned by Major Anderson, could not be regarded by the authorities of the State as indicative of any other purpose than the coercion of the State by the armed force of the Government. The Star of the West had been notified that she could not enter the harbor; notwithstanding which, she persisted in the attempt and was consequently fired into; which act says the Governor, "is perfectly justified by me. In regard to your threat about vessels in the harbor," continues Governor P., "it is only necessary to say you must be the judge of your responsibility."

Subsequently, an arrangement was entered into between Gov. Pickens and Major Anderson, that Lieutenant Talbot should be allowed to go on to Washington without interference, as the bearer of despatches from Anderson to the Government. Governor Woods in his message to the Legislature of Illinois, recommends that the State at once repeal any laws she may have enacted tending to obstruct the operation of Federal authority, or to conflict with the constitutional rights of other States.

REV. MARTIN BURKHOLDER, a Bishop of the Methodist Church, died at Harrisburg, Va., on the 17th of December. The report spread about town on Saturday, that Major Anderson had fired upon Charleston and destroyed it, was untrue. It originated in a bogus telegraphic despatch. The telegraph is nowadays the mother of all lies.

For the Advertiser. Seward's conciliatory speech so called, has thrown the feeble-minded Republicans into ecstasies. But the vigorous and hostile attitude of States towards each other, has already transcended, and cast into the shade the ordinary Executive duties already provided for by the laws. It is assumed that the Executive has the power to place the subject entirely before and beyond the Executive control.

The cause of the present crisis is the independence of the Executive. In all its various bearings, therefore, I commend the question to Congress, as the only human tribunal under the Constitution, possessing the power to meet the existing emergency. To them exclusively belongs the power to declare war or authorize the employment of the military force of the United States. They alone possess the power to remove the grievances which might lead to war, and to secure peace and union to this distracted country. On them, and on them alone, rests the responsibility of meeting the emergency. The Union is sacred trust left by our revolutionary fathers to their descendants; and never did any other people inherit so rich a legacy.

DOINGS IN CONGRESS.—Congressional proceedings on Saturday, the 5th inst., were confined to the Senate, the House having adjourned previous to Monday. Mr. Mason, Virginia, offered a resolution, which was laid over, calling upon the Secretary of War for a copy of any orders issued to the officers in command of the fortifications in any harbor, and for information relative to any proposed increase of the military forces in the Southern States. Mr. Seward responded in a petition of citizens of New York for a Pacific Railroad, and Mr. Gwin having called up the House bill, Mr. Seward proceeded to make a speech in its favor. He preferred a more moderate route than was provided for in the bill, but he declared his intention to vote for it as the only measure of pacification which could be effected. An amendment was rejected from objection. Mr. Rice, of Minnesota, although the great Northwest would not in his close proximity be a source of trouble, he had no objection to it, also declining to propose it. Mr. Polk, of Missouri, proposing that the road shall run from the mouth of the Kansas River, was laid over. The temper of the discussion indicates that the bill will pass at an early day.

Congressional proceedings on Monday, related almost exclusively to the great question now agitating the country, and were extremely interesting. In the Senate, Mr. Ten Eyck, of New Jersey, presented a petition of citizens of that State, requesting Congress to authorize a commission, consisting of three members, one from each of the States of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, to inquire into the claims of the people, who were presented by Mr. Bigler, of Pennsylvania. Mr. Crittenden, then spoke at length in favor of his proposition, and was followed by Tombs, of Georgia, who made a characteristic speech, concluding with a declaration that if the South was denied her rights, she would invoke the God of battles, and trust to him for security and peace. The Senate then went into Executive session, and subsequently adjourned on Tuesday. In the House, Mr. Cobb, of Alabama, in a long and able speech, declared that he was prepared to accept of the "Aldrich and Mississippi" delegation of Saturday, and had been sending a telegraphic dispatch advising "immediate secession." He declared that he hoped something would be done to save the Union, and called upon all parties to make efforts to do so. Mr. Schenck, of Tennessee, asked leave to submit a proposition substantially the same as that agreed upon by the Committee of the Border States on Saturday, but he did not succeed in obtaining a suspension of the rules. The General Appropriation bill was reported in Committee of the Whole, and an amendment was adopted appropriating \$1,350,000 for the purchase of arms, which was subsequently passed by the House. Mr. Adrain, of New Jersey, asked leave to offer a resolution approving of the act of Major Anderson in evacuating Fort Moultrie and occupying Fort Sumter, and plugging the House to sustain the President in all constitutional measures to enforce the laws and preserve the Union. After an incidental speech by Mr. Adrain from Harris, of Kentucky, for a withdrawal of the resolution, a vote was ordered on a motion to suspend the rules and read the bill, which passed 134 for and only 52 against it. The resolution was then put upon its passage, and received 124 yeas, while only 53 were cast against it. The Senate in the morning during the sitting of the roll was a very exciting one—almost a member was ejected his vote, or against the resolution, giving his reason for so doing. The House also adjourned.

The Special Message of President Buchanan in reference to the present distracted condition of the country, and particularly regarding the recent action of South Carolina, was sent to Congress on Wednesday. The message was prepared immediately on the departure of the South Carolina Commissioners from Washington, after their ineffectual endeavor to induce the Administration to surrender the fortifications in Charleston Harbor to the State, and has since been awaiting an opportunity for presentation. The message is as follows:—

THE PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL MESSAGE. To the Senate and House of Representatives: At the opening of your present session, I called your attention to the fact that the threatened existence of the Union, in my opinion, is imperiled by the original causes of these dangers, and recommended such measures as I believed would be effective in restoring to the country, and averting the peril which it had been needlessly and most unfortunately involved. Those opinions and recommendations I do not propose now to repeat, my own convictions upon the whole subject remains unchanged. The fact that a great calamity was impending over the nation, was even at that time recognized by every intelligent citizen. It had already made itself felt throughout the length and breadth of the land. The necessary consequences of the alarm thus produced, which it had reasonably counted upon, to meet its public engagements, trade was paralyzed, manufactures were stopped, the best public securities suddenly sank in the market, every species of property depreciated more or less, and thousands of poor men, who depended on their daily labor for their daily bread, were turned out of employment. I deeply regret that I am unable to give you more information upon the state of the Union, which is more satisfactory than what I was then obliged to communicate. On the contrary, matters are still worse at the present time than they were at that time. When Congress met a strong hope pervaded the whole public mind, that some amicable adjustment of the subject would be speedily made by the Representatives of the States of the people, which might restore peace between the conflicting sections of the country. That hope has been diminished by every hour of delay, and as the prospect of a speedy restoration of peace grows more and more distant, the public distress becomes more and more aggravated. As an evidence of this, it is only necessary to say that the Treasury notes, authorized by the act of the 27th of February, were not advertised according to law, and that no responsible officer dared to take any considerable sum at par, at a lower rate of interest than 12 per cent. From these facts it appears that in a government organized like ours, domestic strife, or even a well grounded fear of civil hostilities, is more destructive to our public and private interests than the most formidable foreign war.

In my Annual Message I expressed the conviction which I have long deliberately held, and which recent reflections have only tended to deepen, that the only way to restore peace and harmony to this distracted country, was to secure to the Executive the power to place the subject entirely before and beyond the Executive control. The cause of the present crisis is the independence of the Executive. In all its various bearings, therefore, I commend the question to Congress, as the only human tribunal under the Constitution, possessing the power to meet the existing emergency. To them exclusively belongs the power to declare war or authorize the employment of the military force of the United States. They alone possess the power to remove the grievances which might lead to war, and to secure peace and union to this distracted country. On them, and on them alone, rests the responsibility of meeting the emergency. The Union is sacred trust left by our revolutionary fathers to their descendants; and never did any other people inherit so rich a legacy.

It is not to be supposed that I have any intention to usurp the power of Congress, or to interfere with its prerogatives. I have no objection to the passage of any law which will secure to the Executive the power to place the subject entirely before and beyond the Executive control. I have no objection to the passage of any law which will secure to the Executive the power to place the subject entirely before and beyond the Executive control. I have no objection to the passage of any law which will secure to the Executive the power to place the subject entirely before and beyond the Executive control.

A PROBLEM SOLVED.—The following problem has arrested many a fellow student, and has puzzled many a mathematician, and partly by its own nature, and partly by its own complexity, it has become a favorite subject of conversation among the students of the University of Cambridge. The problem is as follows:—

imputation on the patriotism of Congress to assert that its members will continue to be a constant menace to the safety of the Union. In several States which have not seceded, the forts, arsenals, and magazines of the United States have been seized. This is by far the most serious step which has been taken since the commencement of the troubles. This public property has been left without garrisons and troops for its protection, because no person in all the States of the Union is authorized to raise a military force sufficient to guard our remote territories against Indian incursions. The seizure of this property, from all appearances, has been purely aggressive, and not in any attempt to coerce a State or States to remain in the Union. It is a violation of the act of March 2, 1847, which prohibits the seizure of arms and magazines in any State which has not seceded from the Union. My opinion remains unchanged, that to seek a general solution of the questions at issue between the North and South. Entertaining this conviction, I refrained even from sending reinforcements to Major Anderson at Fort Sumter, and particularly regarding the recent action of South Carolina, was sent to Congress on Wednesday. The message was prepared immediately on the departure of the South Carolina Commissioners from Washington, after their ineffectual endeavor to induce the Administration to surrender the fortifications in Charleston Harbor to the State, and has since been awaiting an opportunity for presentation. The message is as follows:—

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In my Annual Message I expressed the conviction which I have long deliberately held, and which recent reflections have only tended to deepen, that the only way to restore peace and harmony to this distracted country, was to secure to the Executive the power to place the subject entirely before and beyond the Executive control. The cause of the present crisis is the independence of the Executive. In all its various bearings, therefore, I commend the question to Congress, as the only human tribunal under the Constitution, possessing the power to meet the existing emergency. To them exclusively belongs the power to declare war or authorize the employment of the military force of the United States. They alone possess the power to remove the grievances which might lead to war, and to secure peace and union to this distracted country. On them, and on them alone, rests the responsibility of meeting the emergency. The Union is sacred trust left by our revolutionary fathers to their descendants; and never did any other people inherit so rich a legacy.

It is not to be supposed that I have any intention to usurp the power of Congress, or to interfere with its prerogatives. I have no objection to the passage of any law which will secure to the Executive the power to place the subject entirely before and beyond the Executive control. I have no objection to the passage of any law which will secure to the Executive the power to place the subject entirely before and beyond the Executive control. I have no objection to the passage of any law which will secure to the Executive the power to place the subject entirely before and beyond the Executive control.

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