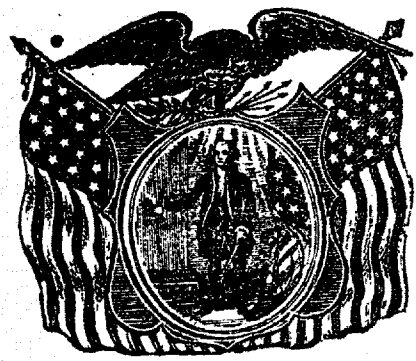


ran through the vast array of witnesses and all was painfully still. In a few moments the entire division, headed by Gen. Franklin, took up the line of march, passing in view of the corpse. Every soldier had a chance to look upon the bleeding victim of his own insubordination, and it is to be presumed that the sight will long be remembered and go far to prevent future desertions.

Lebanon Advertiser.



WHEN DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES CEASE TO LEAD, WE CEASE TO FOLLOW.

WM. M. BRESLIN, Editor and Proprietor.

LEBANON, PA.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1861.

Col. Mulligan, the hero of Lexington, has not a very high opinion of Home Guards. He thinks them, like the Wide Awakes, "invincible in peace and invincible in war."

We publish full and interesting accounts of the troubles with England in to-day's paper. The very latest from England is by the Arago which brings dates to the 11th inst. The warlike sentiment and preparations in England were unabated. A considerable number of additional English troops are to be sent to Canada.

Since we got our hands into it last week by publishing a Republican speech, we rather like the experiment. Republican documents are as entertaining as Colonel C. Biddle's letter, particularly as we hope to please everybody with the former, while with the latter we tread on so many toes. In another column we give the report of the Van Wyck Congressional Investigating Committee. This Committee was appointed by Congress (Republican) to look into the frauds reported to be practised upon the Government in the furnishing of supplies, &c., for the war. The Committee is composed of four Republicans and two Democrats, hence it cannot be supposed that the report was got up maliciously for political effect as was the "Covode Report." The Committee is not yet through with its investigations, but enough has already been elicited to astound mankind.

The receipts of the State for the year, ending November 31, 1861, were \$6,743,523, and the expenditures \$6,873,352. The receipts include loans to the amount of \$3,087,150.

The Courier says we are caviling about a national debt. By reading the Van Wyck report in another column, it will find the justification not only for cavil, but for the most intense denunciation, particularly for that part of the debt most unblushingly stolen by the political friends of the Courier. The Courier is one of the few who still thinks to keep down honest investigation, and cover up the rascalities of the powers that be, by threats of treason and traitor, and boasts of hanging, &c., as was the vogue three months ago, but thank God, that time of lawlessness and mob law is nearly over, and freedom and law are again in the ascendant.

Gen. Scott is already on his way home from Europe, by the Arago. It is said that he is the bearer of an offer of Mediation between England and France from the Emperor Napoleon.

On Saturday Lord Lyons requested to know our Government would be ready to receive the despatches of her Majesty, to which Mr. Seward replied that the subject would receive careful attention without delay.

The latest from Washington is, that it is believed that the trouble with England about Mason and Sillidell will be amicably settled.

The latest advices from Port Royal state that our soldiers have taken possession of Beaufort. An expedition is about being sent out from Port Royal, the destination of which has not been divulged.

Governor of Kansas.—Hon. George A. Crawford (Union Democrat) has been elected Governor of Kansas. Mr. Crawford is a Pennsylvanian. He resided for many years at Lock Haven, Clinton County, and was formerly a clerk in the Post Office Department at Washington.

Hon. Jeremiah S. Black, formerly Attorney Gen. and last Secretary of State, under Mr. Buchanan's administration, has been appointed Reporter for the United States Supreme Court, in the place of Benjamin C. Howard, who resigned on account of his secession proclivities.

The public will remember that just about the time that the rascalities reported by the Van Wyck Committee were in full blast, and seen and known by everybody not wilfully blind, the Courier and its gang of mob-lawyers throughout the country, were intimidating all who refused to bow to Baal, by threats of "wiping out," "halting," "made to draw hemp," &c.—Had law and order ruled then, and a free investigation of the acts of officials been allowed, millions upon millions would have been saved to the Government and people. It has been proven, and will continue to be every day while this rebellion lasts, that Democrats are as loyal and patriotic as the Republicans ever dared to be, and the reign of terror several months ago by the latter will be recorded as the greatest outrage of this civilized age. Those that joined in the "mad dog" cry against Democrats then, were a party, unconscious no doubt in many instances, to the rascalities perpetrated under their shield and protection. The Courier was one of the most violent and foremost in the chase, and from the means at its hand of obtaining information, open to the least excusable. The year of our Lord, 1861, will record many an act and deed that will bring the blush of shame to the cheeks of posterity. It is true many noble and patriotic deeds will also be recorded, but how much better and prouder they would stand without the degrading alloy.

It appears, from the testimony published by the Van Wyck Committee, that the sum of \$2,000,000 was placed at the absolute disposal of Alexander Cummings, of New York, last summer, by the Secretary of War of which he expended about \$300,000, and has not yet made settlement, and the business was so loosely (not to use a harsher term) conducted, that the Committee say "it would seem impossible that these accounts should ever be intelligently settled." It seems that he just bought anything in disregard of price or quantity, and whether wanted or not.

Among the army supplies purchased by Mr. Cummings, are the following:—

280 dozen plates of ale and porter,	\$1.87	\$525.00
25 quarts of coffee, 300 boxes her-		214.37
ring,		
200 boxes ocheo, 25 packages but-		1,541.99
ter, and cartage,		
8 barrels of corn,	127.00	
1,670 dozen straw hats,	4,145.68	
10,680 pairs of linen pants,	17,220.00	
23 barrels of pickles,		
25 cases of Scotch ale, price not		
stated,		
10 cases of London porter, price		
not stated,		
700 Hall's carbines (old arm.), \$15		11,725.00
each, 35 cases, \$35,		

It is not unnecessary to say that these are not understood to be "army supplies," as the term is used, except the 700 Hall's carbines, which is the same arm sold by the War Department in following June for \$3.50 each. It must be borne in mind that Government has its proper officers to attend to purchases and had then in New York its own agents to attend to this very business for which Mr. Cummings was appointed, but Mr. Cummings in his testimony says that "he has been acquainted with the Secretary of War for many years; that their personal relations are very intimate; and that they have been politically acting together for many years."

THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC.

Brilliant Fight with the Rebels. WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—This morning, at six o'clock, a portion of Gen. McCull's division proceeded in the direction of Dranesville on a foraging expedition, and for the purpose of making a reconnaissance in that locality. Dranesville is about midway between McCull's headquarters and Leesburg.

On arriving in that vicinity they encountered the enemy, who had four regiments of infantry, composed of South Carolinians, Alabamians, and Kentuckians, with one battery of six pieces, and a regiment of cavalry, under the command of Gen. Stewart.

The only troops on our part engaged in the affair, at Dranesville, were Gen. Ord's brigade, the First regiment of rifles, and Easton's battery of four guns. At four o'clock, after the action, Gen. McCull sent two officers to count the rebels who were killed and wounded; and it was ascertained that they left on the field fifty-seven killed, and twenty-two wounded. Three of the latter died on being removed, making their loss sixty killed and 19 wounded, making a total of seventy-nine killed and wounded, and they no doubt carried off many more.

They also left nine horses killed or disabled. The enemy were completely routed, and fled precipitately after a fight of an hour and a half, leaving two cannons a quantity of small arms, blankets, great coats, &c., more than our troops could bring away.

Our men also brought in some prisoners besides the wounded. Our loss is, as near as can be ascertained at present, about ten killed and fifteen wounded.

The expedition returned to their camp at Langley's at nine o'clock tonight.

Gen. McCull, in a dispatch received at headquarters to-night, says too much credit cannot be given to Gen. Ord for his gallantry and skill throughout the day.

Congressional Inquiry into Government Contracts.

REPORT OF THE VAN WYCK COMMITTEE.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 17.—Van Wyck's Select Committee to inquire into Government Contracts, made a report to the House of Representatives to-day of their progress. It was presented by Mr. Washburne, of Illinois. The resolutions submitted by the Chairman will be found in the Congressional proceedings.

The Committee report that they held their sittings in Washington, New York, Boston, New Bedford, St. Louis, Cairo, Chicago and Harrisburg, and the members have traveled from six to seven thousand miles in the performance of their duties. They have examined 265 witnesses, and the testimony embraced in the present report will cover eleven hundred pages.

The labors of the Committee are far from being closed. A large number of transactions at Washington and elsewhere seem to deserve their attention, and with the approbation of the House, the Committee proposes to vigorously prosecute their investigation, so long as it may appear that they are demanded by the public interest.

THE STEAMER CATALINE CASE.

Among the first subjects investigated was the charter of the steamer Cataline. She was chartered by Col. D. D. Tompkins, Assistant Quartermaster-General, of New York, under an order from General Wool. No doubt can be entertained that Col. Tompkins acted in entire good faith, so far as he was connected with the transaction. M. M. Freeman & Co. held as security for the money they had advanced the insurance of \$20,000 on the vessel, the notes of several other parties and the contract with the Government.

The contract with the Government is not remarkable for disinterestedness in promoting the National welfare; yet the Government will certainly be satisfied with ordinary fairness and integrity in contracts made on its behalf, even if a willingness to seize upon the public misfortunes for personal aggrandizement is manifested in the transaction. While the Republic has a right to expect it, it cannot compel the selfish conduct of its citizens.

The provision that the Government shall pay \$50,000 for a vessel just purchased for \$14,000, in the event of her loss, by a peril not covered by the insurance, is totally indefensible. But the main provision of the contract, while undoubtedly exorbitant, is less to be condemned. The Government was to pay \$10,000 per month for the vessel, and that, too, for a period of not less than three months. Col. Tompkins seems to have paid no attention to the time for which the vessel was chartered. The order of Gen. Wool is silent on the subject. The presence of Capt. Comstock at the time the proposition was drawn up would justify the inference that the time, which was a very material feature in the contract, was adjusted between himself and Develin and Freeman, the other parties then present.

There is some conflict in the evidence as to what would be a fair price for the charter of the vessel, and especially as to the cost of running her. The latter inquiry is manifestly the most important in its practical results. The committee especially call attention to the arrangement between the Secretary of the Navy and Mr. Morgan, for purchasing vessels for the Government, saying that it is of such a character, whether it be in the stipulated amount received or in the mode of payment, alike indefensible and reprehensible.

The arrangement is a system of commission, usually 21 per cent. of the purchase money paid for each vessel, and one under which Morgan received as compensation during the period of seven weeks previous to the 6th day of September (when this testimony was taken) the enormous sum of \$51,584—as admitted by himself before the committee. If he has received the same rate of compensation since as before that date, there must be added to this sum paid him before that date, the further commission of \$43,424, for services rendered since, making, in all, the sum of \$95,000 paid to a single individual, for his services as agent of the Government since the 15th of July—a period of four months and a half.

THE PURCHASE OF ARMS.

The committee next devoted themselves to the subject of the purchase of arms.—The extraordinary demand for them, resulting from the conspiracy to overthrow the Union, has resulted in extraordinary expenditures, and exciting the cupidity of large numbers of persons both in Europe and America, has opened up a system of unprecedented speculation. The Government has been the victim of more than one conspiracy, and remarkable combinations have been formed to rob the Treasury.

The profit from the sale of arms to the Government have been enormous, and realized, too, in many instances by our own citizens, through a system of brokerage as unprincipled and dishonest, and as unfriendly to the success and welfare of the nation as the plottings of actual treason.

The system adopted at an early moment for the purchase of arms naturally encouraged this result. The Government and the several States, entering the market in active and direct competition, stimulated it, it is true, to some slight extent and temporarily, the importation and manufacture of arms, but scarcely compensated for a general profligacy in the expenditure of the public treasure and the corruption of the public morals.

Since the adjournment of the Extra Session of Congress, the War Department is understood to have authorized the several States, and to have recognized the right in the Generals commanding the several divisions in the army, to purchase arms, to be paid for by the General Government, creating an unwise and ruinous competition against itself, without increasing the number of arms in the market.

The Committee, after examining into the effect of this system of competition last September, called the attention of the War Department to the subject, and suggested, as the only effective remedy, that the purchase of arms should be confined to a single bureau; and the several States notified, that the General Government would not pay for arms purchased in competition with itself. The committee are informed that this policy has been adopted—a most desirable result, although its earlier adoption would have saved millions of the Treasury, and at the same time, by placing the arms purchased under the control of the Government, would have secured their use at points where the public safety was the most in peril.

Major Hagron, an ordnance officer, who was engaged in the purchased and inspection of arms, testified as follows:—

"The agents of Fremont, of the Governors of States, of Cities, of Union Defence Committees, of Colonels of Regiments and of Generals of our army, are all here in New York. I may be in treaty for arms, and the first thing I hear the arms are sold to some agent. Some of the men who hold the arms, I sometimes think, are disposed not to have a bona fide sale.—They like to keep the arms in the market, in order to advance the price. I think they have been gambling in arms just as they do in stocks, etc."

The Committee remark that in numerous cases which have come under their observation, the price paid for arms was inexorably exorbitant. In some instances the arms were worthless and in others exorbitance in price was coupled with other evidence of a purpose to defraud the Government.

The abuses in the purchase of Austrian and other fire-arms are noticed and the testimony appended.

ARMY SUPPLIES. Next the Committee examined into the army supplies, among other things, that of the purchase of supplies, or from corrupt motives, or from the want of prudence, the Act of Congress relating to contracts to be made by the Government.

The Committee say that in the purchase of cattle there is much evidence of gross mismanagement, and in the purchase of horses and wagons in New York, they find great irregularities.

The Committee call attention to a case of the official prostitution of official position to the base purpose of illegal gains, as set forth in the evidence of Samuel A. Hopkins; and in this connection the Committee say that a man by the name of Wood, enjoying the confidence of the President, was appointed Commissioner of Public Buildings, a place not only requiring great business capacity, but unflinching integrity; and that Wood, from his own declarations, made himself an instrument for plundering the Government.—The Committee, in discharge of their duty, made a representation of the facts to the Executive, but, before any action was taken, the Government was relieved from the presence of an unworthy official by his resignation.

THE PURCHASE OF HORSES AND MULES. The Committee found that the most astounding and unblushing frauds had been perpetrated in the purchase of horses and mules, and matters were so arranged that it was impossible for the original owners to sell either horses or mules directly to the Government, but all such sales were made by certain middle-men and between, who, it appears, alone could get any horses or mules taken by the Quartermaster's Department.

The abuses in the Western Military Department are prominently eliminated, including those relating to the shipment of ice, the diversion of moneys from the Paymaster's Department for which they were appropriated, the rotten and condemned blankets, the roofing of the Benton barracks, transportation, &c., &c.

In the above notice, the language of the Committee has been quoted throughout. The report is signed by Messrs. Van Wyck, (N. Y.) Washburne, (Ill.) Holman, (Ind.) Fenton, (N. Y.), Dawes, (Mass.) and Steele, (N. J.) In the other member, Mr. Jackson, is absent in Kentucky.

FROM EUROPE.

For additional foreign news see first page.

THREE DAYS LATER.

CAPRICE, Dec. 15.—The steamer City of Washington passed here this morning, with English dates to the 5th inst. The San Jacinto affair monopolizes the attention of the press, who denounce it in the strongest terms, and active naval preparation are being made.

The latest by telegraph to Queenstown says the excitement is unabated. The Paris Tribune repeats the statement that Louis Napoleon has tendered his services as a mediator.

The Paris Patrie has an editorial forecasting the disposition of France to recognize the Southern Confederacy if England sets the example.

When the Europa sailed, there was a more hopeful look and consists and cotton slightly improved; but after digesting the tone of the American press a reaction set in, and fears were entertained that the Washington Government would justify the seizure of Mason and Sillidell.

The English journals are very bitter and hostile, continuing to treat the affair as an intolerable insult. The instructions to Lord Lyons, on which the Cabinet was unanimous are explicit and determined.

At the banquet at Rochdale, Mr. Bright made an elaborate speech on American affairs, but declined to give a decided opinion on the Trent affair. He believed that the United States will make fitting reparation. He strongly condemned any warlike feelings, and pointed out the idea that the American Cabinet had re-

solved to pick a quarrel with England, and made a brilliant peroration in favor of the North.

A letter from Gen. Scott, in favor of the maintenance of friendly relations between England and America, attracts much attention.

The Shipping Gazette believes there is a possibility, but a remote one, that the Federal Government may disavow the acts of Capt. Wilkes, and even go to the length of releasing the Southern Commissioners; but if the demand is not complied with, a declaration of war on the part of England is certain. If the Federal Government is resolved at all hazards to force a quarrel on England, they have certainly a good opportunity, but they must be actuated by something little short of madness to avail themselves of it.

The London Post says that an acknowledgment of error and a surrender of the prisoners will be received with great joy—but if the Federal Government fails to comply, no man in England will blind his eyes to the alternative that England must do her duty.

The London Times continues to assert that it has been Mr. Seward's policy to force a quarrel with England, and calls for energetic military preparations in Canada.

A serious decline is daily taken place in Canadian securities, amounting to 12 per cent. The London Times predicts three things to immediately follow an outbreak with the United States, namely—the destruction of the Southern blockade, the blockade of the Northern ports, and the recognition of the Southern Confederacy by England and France.

The Daily News rejoices that the American Congress meets before the English demands can get out, and hopes that it will act with honor and dignity, and that the golden opportunity will not be lost.

TWO DAYS LATER—ARRIVAL OF THE JURA. We have two days' later foreign news by the arrival of the Jura at Portland. The excitement in London relative to the Trent affair continues unabated, and the stock market was more heavy and unsettled than ever.

The iron clad frigate Warrior was coaling for service on the North American coast. There was quite a rise in sugar and salt-peter. No charters were being taken for American vessels. The tone of reserve on the part of the French press increases, and several leading Paris papers blame the English government for having yielded to the pressure of public opinion, as represented merely by Manchester and Liverpool, and have acted too hastily in the Trent affair.

The U. S. Consul at Paris publishes an important letter of General Scott on the Trent affair. The strength of the American navy is being canvassed in England, and while affecting to dispise it, they recollect former defeats, and urge that though we may do little what we do will be done well. The French Minister at Wn is said to have reported that the government at Washington refuses to deliver up despatches addressed to the French Consuls at New Orleans and Charleston. Mr. Sillidell's dispatches were entrusted to his wife as he was leaving the Trent. The Paris Patrie says that in Nov. the San Jacinto searched a French, a Danish, and a Portuguese vessel.

GOOD NEWS FROM MISSOURI.

1300 Prisoners and a large amount of stores taken. ST. LOUIS, Dec. 20.—Further information is received from the West this morning, to the effect that, in addition to the expedition of Gen. Pope against the enemy at near Clinton, the county seat of Henry county, another part of his forces, under Col. Davis and Major Marshall, surprised another Camp of rebels on the afternoon of the 18th, near Natfort, a little north of Warrensburg.

A brush skirmish ensued when the rebels, finding themselves surrounded, surrendered. Col. Davis took 1300 prisoners, including three Colonels, seventeen Captains, 1000 stand of arms, sixty-five wagons, one thousand horses, a large quantity of tents, baggage and supplies. Our loss was two killed and eight wounded. The rebel loss is not yet known.

Information from Glasgow states that our troops have captured about two tons of powder, buried on Claib Jackson's farm.

Major Hibbard captured sixty rebels a day or two since, in Johnson county. Good news is expected from Kansas, the troops having been moving briskly in the last day or two.

FULL PARTICULARS OF THE CHARLESTON FIRE.

FORTRESS MONROE, Dec. 16.—The Norfolk and Richmond papers give full particulars of the extensive conflagration in Charleston, S. C.—The fire broke out about 9 o'clock on the evening of the 11th, in Russell & Old's sash and blind factory, at the foot of Hazel street, crossing Hazel street it extended to the machine shop of Cameron & Co. Before midnight the fire had assumed an appalling magnitude, and Meeting street, from Market to Queen, was one mass of ruins—as a tenement after tenement was enveloped in flames. The panic was awful and thousands of families evacuated their houses and filled the streets.

The buildings in the lower part of the city, where the fire broke out, were principally of wood, and extremely inflammable, which accounts for the remarkably rapid progress of the fire. At midnight the Circular Church, and the Institute Hall were burning, and the proximity of the flames to the Charleston Hotel and the Mills House caused them to be evacuated by their inmates. At one o'clock the fire extended more to the southward, towards the corner of Archdale and King streets, to the rear of the Charleston Hotel, and to the end of Hayne street. Crossing Market street, the fire spread down East Bay to Cumberland street, and across to the Mills House, including in its destruction the Circular Church, Institute Hall and the Charleston Hotel. All the buildings on King street from Market to Broad street, were destroyed before 8 o'clock.

Gen. Ripley, who superintended the movement of troops, who had arrived on the scene about this time, ordered several buildings in the route of the conflagration to be blown up, and after some delay the order was executed, but not before the Theatre, Lloyd's coach factory, opposite the Express office, the old Executive building and all houses from this point to Queen street, had caught fire and been destroyed. At about four o'clock the wind changed the direction of the flames towards Broad street. Soon after St. Andrew's Hall took fire, and subsequently the Cathedral, the spire of which fell shortly after five. The fire made a clean sweep through the city, making its track from East Bay to King street.

The Charleston Courier of the 13th gives a list of between 200 and 300 sufferers, and says that the loss is estimated at from five to seven millions of dollars. Mr. Russell, at whose factory the fire originated, thinks it must have been occasioned by an incendiary, or by negligence of negroes employed there.

A dispatch from Charleston, dated the 18th, says "the Mills House, although threatened, and several times on fire, eventually escaped, and is only slightly damaged."

A message was sent to the Confederate Congress on Friday, by President Davis, in relation to the conflagration at Charleston, recommending an appropriation in aid of the sufferers. A resolution was accordingly unanimously adopted, appropriating \$250,000 as an advance on account of claims of South Carolina upon the Confederate States.

The Charleston Mercury says that five hundred and seventy-six buildings were burnt.

Five churches were destroyed by the Charleston fire—the Cathedral, St. Peter's, Episcopal, Cumberland Street Methodist, and the Circular Church.

XXXVIIIth Congress. Abstract of Proceedings. SENATE, Dec. 20.—Mr. Sumner moved for the expulsion of Senator Bright. Later wanted it referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. A debate ensued. Mr. Lane, of Indiana, offered a resolution, which was agreed to, requesting the Judiciary Committee to provide by law that aiders and abettors of treason may be prevented from bringing suits for the collection of debts in the U. S. Courts.—Mr. Ten Eyck offered a resolution, which was laid over, declaring the object of the war to be the preservation of the Union and to enforce the Constitution; that extreme, radical, and disruptive measures, involving loyal and disloyal, should not be resorted to, and that in suppressing treason the government cannot prove a traitor to the organic law. The resolution to expel Senator Bright was referred to the Judiciary Committee. Mr. Trumbull called up his resolution asking the Secretary of State if persons had been arrested for treason in the loyal States, which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, by yeas 25, noes 17. The Senate then went into executive session, and afterwards adjourned.

Mr. Vallandigham offered a resolution endorsing the arrest of Mason and Sillidell, which was immediately referred to the Committee on the Judiciary by a vote of 109 to 18. Among the bills introduced, and referred was one donating lands to the several States for founding agricultural colleges. The House passed a bill to strike from the pension rolls the names of all persons who have taken up arms against the Government, or in any manner aided the rebellion. Mr. Gauger introduced a bill for the relief of the Union prisoners at Richmond which was referred to the Military Committee. The bill to raise a force of twelve months volunteers in Kentucky was taken up debated and passed. A joint resolution was passed to adjourn on Thursday next to the 6th of January.

TUESDAY, Dec. 17.—In the Senate, Mr. Wilson reported a bill to increase the number of cadets at West Point. Mr. Poot offered a resolution, which was adopted, calling for information by what authority the national capital has been converted into a bakery.—Mr. Latham offered a resolution which was agreed to, inquiring as to the authority for imposing the passport system upon the California passengers. Mr. Sherman offered a resolution, which was agreed to, calling for the correspondence between Gens. Scott and Patterson. The Chair announced as the Senate part of the joint committee to investigate the general conduct of the war. Messrs. Wade, Chandler and Johnson. The Senate then went into an Executive session, and subsequently adjourned.

In the House, the Committee of Ways and Means reported the Civil Appropriation bill, and also proposing an additional million of dollars for gunboats on the western waters. The latter was passed. The House then went into committee on the Pension Appropriation bill. It was amended so that no pension shall be paid to any person engaged in the present rebellion, or who has given aid and comfort to the enemy, and then the bill passed. The House passed a bill directing the War Department to pay the volunteers actually employed in the western department the pay and bounty as in regular enlistments. Mr. Steele offered a resolution, which was passed, instructing the Van Wyck investigating committee to inquire into the policy of abolishing sutlerships. Mr. Colfax called attention to a communication from the Post Office Department, stating that members of Congress frequently give franked envelopes in large numbers to cover the private correspondence of others. Adjourned.

THURSDAY, Dec. 19.—In the Senate, Mr. Wiley, of Virginia, offered a resolution that the existing war be forced upon the country by the States in rebellion without provocation, and was designed to destroy the Union and the Constitution. On this topic Mr. Wiley made a speech. The House resolution to adjourn over the holidays was taken up, but pending its discussion the quorum vanished, and the Senate followed it.

In the House, a resolution was adopted requesting the Secretary of War to furnish the cost of transportation of arms, ordnance and munitions of war to the west. A bill to amend the act of July last by extending the \$100 bounty to the three months' volunteers was, after debate, tabled. The bill to provide for the construction of twenty iron-clad steam gunboats was passed. The Consular and Diplomatic appropriation bill was considered and passed. Resolutions were adopted instructing the Committee on Elections to report whether any member of the House is also receiving compensation for any other office, directing an inquiry into the building of the Capitol and Treasury extensions, whether the contracts had been faithfully performed and whether the work cannot be done at less expense to the Government, and instructing the Select Committee on Contracts to inquire whether the transportation of troops by railroad was by special contract or otherwise.

The Queen's messenger, with despatches to Lord Lyons, arrived at Washington on Thursday morning, and very soon after came Captain Cook, of Boston, bearing despatches from the American Minister, Mr. Adams, to our Government. The despatches were placed in the hands of Mr. Seward. While staying in detail the feelings of the British Government and people, Mr. Adams expresses no knowledge of the nature of the instructions sent to Lord Lyons.—Private letters, however, received at Washington from several prominent statesmen in England, state that no exorbitant demand will be made on our government for the surrender of Mason and Sillidell, but that only such apology and satisfaction will be demanded as the United States Government can honorably grant. Other letters from authoritative parties in England confirm these views. Lord Lyons had made no communication whatever to the Secretary of State up to eleven o'clock Thursday night.

The New York Tribune's Washington despatch, says: "The general feeling of the city is less war like than at first, and people talk coolly of surrendering the Rebel emissaries, if it can be done without a sacrifice of honor, rather than engage at this time in a foreign war. The report that members of the Cabinet take a similar view of the question gains currency and finds belief. But, while it is not true that such conclusion has been arrived at in Cabinet meeting, on the one hand, it is untrue, on the other hand, that the determination not to surrender under any circumstances or for any consideration is absolute—that, while the Government will do nothing to provoke hostilities, it will guard well the National honor."

A prominent member of the Government stated in conversation this evening that Lord Lyons would not demand his passports, that Mason and Sillidell would not be given up, and that there was no probability of a war with England. Satisfactory, it true.

Hon. R. Knass, Esq., a well known member of the Philadelphia Bar, and a prominent member of the order of Odd-Fellows, died in Philadelphia, on Thursday last.

The Legislature of Kentucky on Tuesday, elected Hon. Garrett Davis to the United States Senate for the unexpired term of John C. Breckinridge.

was postponed authorizing the construction of twenty iron-clad steam gunboats by contract or otherwise, to cost from \$500,000 to \$800,000.

WEDNESDAY, Dec. 18.—In the Senate, Mr. Sausbury offered a resolution, which was laid over, calling for a copy of Gen. Phelps' proclamation and the authority upon which it was based. Mr. Doolittle introduced a bill to provide for the collection of direct taxes in insurrectionary districts, by taking land to pay the tax, specifying by proclamation what districts are in insurrection, so that the owners of the lands seized may have the opportunity of redemption. Mr. Sumner offered a resolution, which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, to expel Senator Polk for treason.

A communication was received from the War Department transmitting the orders of Gen. Halleck. Mr. Sumner's resolution that the army shall not be used to surrender fugitive slaves was taken up, discussed, and agreed to; as also was Mr. Latham's resolution asking the Secretary of State why passports were required of passengers from New York to San Francisco. After an executive session the Senate adjourned.

In the House, the Committee of Ways and Means reported the Civil Appropriation bill, and also proposing an additional million of dollars for gunboats on the western waters. The latter was passed. The House then went into committee on the Pension Appropriation bill. It was amended so that no pension shall be paid to any person engaged in the present rebellion, or who has given aid and comfort to the enemy, and then the bill passed. The House passed a bill directing the War Department to pay the volunteers actually employed in the western department the pay and bounty as in regular enlistments. Mr. Steele offered a resolution, which was passed, instructing the Van Wyck investigating committee to inquire into the policy of abolishing sutlerships. Mr. Colfax called attention to a communication from the Post Office Department, stating that members of Congress frequently give franked envelopes in large numbers to cover the private correspondence of others. Adjourned.

THURSDAY, Dec. 19.—In the Senate, Mr. Wiley, of Virginia, offered a resolution that the existing war be forced upon the country by the States in rebellion without provocation, and was designed to destroy the Union and the Constitution. On this topic Mr. Wiley made a speech. The House resolution to adjourn over the holidays was taken up, but pending its discussion the quorum vanished, and the Senate followed it.

In the House, a resolution was adopted requesting the Secretary of War to furnish the cost of transportation of arms, ordnance and munitions of war to the west. A bill to amend the act of July last by extending the \$100 bounty to the three months' volunteers was, after debate, tabled. The bill to provide for the construction of twenty iron-clad steam gunboats was passed. The Consular and Diplomatic appropriation bill was considered and passed. Resolutions were adopted instructing the Committee on Elections to report whether any member of the House is also receiving compensation for any other office, directing an inquiry into the building of the Capitol and Treasury extensions, whether the contracts had been faithfully performed and whether the work cannot be done at less expense to the Government, and instructing the Select Committee on Contracts to inquire whether the transportation of troops by railroad was by special contract or otherwise.

The Queen's messenger, with despatches to Lord Lyons, arrived at Washington on Thursday morning, and very soon after came Captain Cook, of Boston, bearing despatches from the American Minister, Mr. Adams, to our Government. The despatches were placed in the hands of Mr. Seward. While staying in detail the feelings of the British Government and people, Mr. Adams expresses no knowledge of the nature of the instructions sent to Lord Lyons.—Private letters, however, received at Washington from several prominent statesmen in England, state that no exorbitant demand will be made on our government for the surrender of Mason and Sillidell, but that only such apology and satisfaction will be demanded as the United States Government can honorably grant. Other letters from authoritative parties in England confirm these views. Lord Lyons had made no communication whatever to the Secretary of State up to eleven o'clock Thursday night.

The New York Tribune's Washington despatch, says: "The general feeling of the city is less war like than at first, and people talk coolly of surrendering the Rebel emissaries, if it can be done without a sacrifice of honor, rather than engage at this time in a foreign war. The report that members of the Cabinet take a similar view of the question gains currency and finds belief. But, while it is not true that such conclusion has been arrived at in Cabinet meeting, on the one hand, it is untrue, on the other hand, that the determination not to surrender under any circumstances or for any consideration is absolute—that, while the Government will do nothing to provoke hostilities, it will guard well the National honor."

A prominent member of the Government stated in conversation this evening that Lord Lyons would not demand his passports, that Mason and Sillidell would not be given up, and that there was no probability of a war with England. Satisfactory, it true.

Hon. R. Knass, Esq., a well known member of the Philadelphia Bar, and a prominent member of the order of Odd-Fellows, died in Philadelphia, on Thursday last.

The Legislature of Kentucky on Tuesday, elected Hon. Garrett Davis to the United States Senate for the unexpired term of John C. Breckinridge.