The Pittsburgh Gazette.

PUBLISHED BY

THE GAZETTE PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1865.

THE ALABAMA CONTROVERSY.

As this case is likely to be of protracted duration, and give rise to a good deal of discussion, a brief statement of the material facts, upon which the issues are made, will possess an important interest and greatly assist the reader, who is inclined to follow the controversy as it progresses, and is not already familiar with its history.

The undisputed facts, which have become a part of the history of the times, are; that the Alabama was built at Liverpool by British shipwrights, for the Confederate States; that she took on her outfit and most of her men from that place; that, slipping her cables, she anchored forty miles below, at Moelfra Bay, where she shipped the rest of her crew and materials for gun-carriages; that she then proceeded to the Azores, where she was met by a British vessel, sailing from a British port, having her guns on board, and a few of her officers; that these guns and men were transferred to her under the British flag, that thenceforth Captain SEMMES took command and raised the rebel colors; that from that time setting forth on her work of destruction, she was subsequently received into British ports and treated as a naval public vessel of a friendly power, until she met the Kearsarge, and was sunk.

In regard to the manner of her escape, there are descrepancies as to certain details, which are not material.

The Alabama was built in 1862 and was then called "No. 290." The British government were apprised from time to time while the vessel was building, by our minister, Mr. ADAMS, of her character and designs. But the officers of the Crown refused to act upon the information thus furnished them, and never themselves took any avowed measures to ascertain the character of this or any other Confederate vessel built in the English ports. Not until she was ready to sail, and when all the world knew her purpose, did the British Admiralty deem the proofs submitted by Mr. ADAMS sufficient to act upon. By a curious infelicity or felicity, she escaped by stratagem (?) on the very day, July 29th, 1862, that the government made up its mind to send, and did send telegraphic dispatches to Liverpool ordering her seizure. The stratagem (?) by which the escaped doesn't seem to a landsman very deep laid; but a very simple and obvious proceeding for a vessel to take, when it didn't care about waiting for the formalities of taking out her papers, before going to sea. The rebel agents had secret information that an order for the seizure of the vessel would be issued on the 29th. On that day it was determined to make a trial trip of the vessel to Moelfra bay, forty miles distant, as stated above. She remained there shipping hands and material, until the 31st. The proper officers of the British government were informed on the 30th, by our consul at Liverpool, of the position and proceedings of the vessel since she left Liverpool, under the pretence of taking a trial trip. No steps were taken to arrest her.

These appear to be the most important facts, upon which the United States substantiates its claims against the British Government for damages in consequence of the destruction of the property of American citizens by the Confederate cruiser. The United States do not put their claims upon the violation of a British statute which provides for the forfeiture of any vessel which shall be equipped and fitted out in English ports, to act against a belligerent with whom Great Britain was at peace. By a decision in the British courts this statute has been rendered inoperative in a similar case.

Our Government rests its claims upon the broad and well established principles of international law, which require nations to use all reasonable diligence to prevent armed vessels from being fitted out by their own citizens to destroy the commerce of a nation with whom they are at peace. If such vessel is sent forth without any fraud on the part of the neutral government, then that government is bound to seize and, should she return to her ports, and to restore to her owners any prizes she may bring in. The Nation observes, that, "the United States insist that if the neutral government has been guilty of negligence in using measures to prevent the escape of such armed vessel, then it is chargeable with the further duty of making reparation to the individuals whose property has been taken or destroyed by the cruiser. It should be noticed that this latter claim depends, in fact, upon two elements, the negligence of the neutral authorities, and the rules of the public law growing out of such negligence. It is nowhere asserted that the mere fact of a mere surreptitious equipment and escape of a hostile cruiser entails the duty of reparation for losses upon the neutral power.

"The issue, therefore, between the United States and Great Britain resolves itself into two simple questions, the one of fact, the other of law. The first, were the British authorities culpably negligent in taking measures to detain the Alabama? The second, granting such negligence, does the international law throw upon them the duty of making compensation to American citizens?"

HON. GEORGE THOMPSON.

This gentleman, who is to lecture this evening at Mechanic Hall on the subject of "From London to Calcutta," and to-morrow evening on the "Signs of the Times," has a high reputation in this and his own country, as one of England's greatest orators. Nearly forty years ago his fame was established by his attacks upon the abuses of the English government of India; a few years later, in the face of bitter opposition, he denounced American slavery, when few dared to raise their voices against it. Now that the cause he then advocated has triumphed, he returns amongst us, and should be welcomed as rich as well merited; and we are sure that he will fully meet the expectations of the public. The clearness and precision of his style enable him to embody much matter in few words, and to instruct as well as please.

THE GALE ON THE COAST.—The gale of October 23d, along the southern Atlantic coast, appears to have been the severest experienced there for many years. The whole coast, from Hatteras to Key West, is lined with wrecks. Sailing vessels seem to have suffered most. The steamer Fung Shuey having counted over two hundred of them ashore or wrecked; but several steamers were destroyed, the crews and passengers escaping after much exposure in open boats and on rafts. In ordinary times, so many vessels would not subject themselves to the peril of wreck at this season of the year, on the coast; but the eagerness to resume trade, with the South has doubtless tempted many into a venture which ordinary prudence would have taught them to avoid.

THE FENIAN MOVEMENT.

That the people who are engaged in this strange organization expect to accomplish some great thing there can be no question. That they will disturb to some degree the peace of the world, and occasion considerable uneasiness to the government and people of Great Britain, is equally certain. But that they will succeed in accomplishing the avowed object they have in view—the dismemberment of Ireland from the British empire—no man in his sober senses believes. Some think that they no serious intention of attempting anything of the kind; but that their loud threats of what they will do in and for Ireland are but blinds to conceal a far different design—a descent upon Canada.

It would be impossible to make even a serious demonstration against Ireland without a powerful naval force, which it is simply impossible for any organization however numerous, to provide, without first possessing themselves of a strong well-ordered government upon territory of their own. But in the case of the British possessions on this continent a sudden irruption across the line, in considerable force, might be successful; and if these people have ordinary sagacity they will not attempt more than this for the present at least. What they would do with Canada if they had it—what sort of a government they would set up—are questions which the event alone, if it ever happens, must solve. A secret society transformed into an empire would be something new under the sun, and a consummation that does not promise much for the promotion of good government or human happiness.

The probability, however, is that, like most wild and ill conceived schemes, this movement will come to nought. It has yet to live without a foundation; a thing devoid of sufficient solidity or cohesion to enable it to sustain a single shock of real war. Nevertheless it will have its effect upon the world, and especially upon those engaged in it, and still more upon the relations which so many of the Irish people, both in the old country and in this, bear to the Church of Rome. It will not break the yoke of Great Britain from the neck of Ireland, but the yoke of Rome will never again be as strong as it has been. Fenianism as rank rebellion against the church as against the crown; and while the latter is able to crush it by sheer force, the former has no means by which to maintain its supremacy. It is in this aspect of the subject that this Fenian movement is peculiarly interesting; and it is this which fills the minds of good men with mingled hope and apprehension in view of it. What would Celtic Irishmen, with their wild and ungovernable natures, be without any religious restraints, when all the restraining force of a despotic church, to which they have hitherto been fanatically devoted, has never been able to keep them from breaking one another's heads?

But things appear to be breaking up. Slavery in America was strangely and violently broken up; and here appears to be another work of emancipation still more strange and unexpected. Politics seem to be growing too strong for creeds, and passion to be sweeping away the landmarks and barriers of conscience.

THE CURRENCY.

A short time since an estimate was put forward by interested speculators in New York, which put the amount of currency in circulation at the following figures:

[illegible]	$[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]

The [illegible] was a wind speculations in stocks, breadstuffs, cotton, and everything else, and [illegible] for it was argued the [illegible] we have over twelve hundred millions of paper money afloat, prices [illegible] unreasonably advance.

The speculators, however, were a little too fast. They have been operating for [illegible] and not on futures. Currency [illegible] have now, in the October statement of the National debt, and the late quarterly statement of the National Banks, official data for making up a reliable table or figures on this subject, as follows:

Greenbacks issued	$[illegible]
National Bank [illegible]	[illegible]
State Banks	[illegible]
[illegible]	$[illegible]

This would be a little more than one hundred millions of dollars in excess of the estimate of the speculators, being $145,000,000 under the figures of the speculators. But this is not all. From the aforesaid total we have to deduct the following items:

Notes held in U. S. Treasury	$ [illegible]
Reserve fund of the National Banks	[illegible]
Compound Interest Notes	17,012,144
Total	$[illegible]

This would reduce the total amount in circulation to $465,000,000, or but little more than one third of the speculators' estimate.

The Reserve Fund of the National Banks is one which they are required by law to keep on hand, and it cannot diminish without a corresponding diminution of their circulation. It is constantly on the increase, and we may therefore safely deduct it from the circulation. The same is true of the compound interest notes. They are now all laid away for investment, and are practically withdrawn from the circulation. They form no part of the currency, and are not likely ever again to enter into it.

With all due allowances, we cannot conceive it possible that the money in circulation exceeds $500,000,000. This is entirely [illegible] but it is not enough to justify the attempts making to inflate prices to the point that would be warranted by a circulation double this amount.

FABRICATED NEWS.—The public should never believe anything that appears as special news from Washington in the New York *Herald*. Whatever is new in those specials is rarely ever true; and what is true in them is rarely ever new. One of the latest evidences of this is to be found in the report that CALEB CUSHING had been sent to England on a special mission of the Government, which was afterwards followed by the statement that Mr CUSHING went out to displace Mr. ADAMS, and that the latter would return and take Mr. SEWARD's place. The fact turns out to be that Mr. CUSHING is now and has for some time been in Washington, on professional business, and it is probable that he will remain there while the Supreme Court is in session.

THE CHOLERA.—The breaking out of the cholera upon our emigrant ships, and the introduction of that plague into New York harbor, brings home to all the conviction that there is no escape from the pestilence, which goes where it listeth. Its appearance in the city of New York is simply a question of time; and we have no doubt that the fears of the press of that city that it will find abundant food for its ravages in the crowded and filthy quarters, which are its special disgrace, will be fully realized.

THE CHOLERA IN NEW YORK.

There is said to be intense excitement in New York in consequence of the appearance of the cholera in that port, brought by the steamer Atlanta. The actual presence of the cholera in a community like New York is well calculated to produce a sensation; but we cannot see why there should be such an "intense excitement" on its appearance now in that city, as there appears to be. Intense excitements spring up suddenly from unexpected causes, which in their results threaten calamities and misfortunes, to meet which no precaution has been taken. Can it be said that the approach of the cholera to our shores is unexpected, and that we have had no premonition of its coming? Has not the spread of the fatal pestilence in the East, and its steady advance to the West from city to city, until its final appearance on the Eastern shores of the Atlantic been enough to forwarn us, that its deadly presence in our country, was sure to be felt at an early day? No future event could be predicted with more certainty or definiteness than the approach of the cholera to our shores. And yet now that it is here, in exact accordance with the notices, which we have from time to time received of its coming, intense excitement and surprise is manifested at the accomplishment of an event which human agency could neither avert nor postpone. We must say the announcement of its presence in New York is not surprising to us. We have been expecting and looking for it by every arrival from the East. Nevertheless the intelligence is profoundly impressive, and cannot but cause serious reflections as to the deadly consequences likely to ensue as to the spread of the fatal pestilence. The cholera in Canada last, neither its appearance nor stayed by cold weather. It may be in almost any day. And when it [illegible] most surely will sooner or later, not it may find us in easy excited and alarmed. It [illegible] on every hand that no exciting cause of the disease is more potent than fear. There may yet be sufficient time to take all the precautions it is possible for us to take. It may not make its appearance here before the coming spring. The intervening time should be used in making the [illegible] preparations for whatever may be in store for us then.

GEORGIA.

The soft wing is the text of the paragraph of the amended Constitution of this State:

"The Government of the United States having, as a war measure, proclaimed all slaves, held or owned in this State, emancipated from slavery, and having carried that proclamation into full and practical effect; their shall therefore be, within the State of Georgia, neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, save as a punishment for crime, after the legal conviction thereof; provided, this exception in the action of the Government of the United States, is no intendment to give rise to the iniquitous, or warrant the appel of such claim for compensation as is sanctioned, by reason of the emancipation of his slaves, to any citizen of Georgia now hereafter make upon the justice and magnanimity of that Government."

Here the abolition of slavery is declared to be, not the act of that State but, the act of the United States, and the Convention which framed it, freeing itself from the responsibility of a measure so distasteful to its members, takes care to insert a saving clause under which the State can set up a claim for compensation from the National Government for the slaves which as a category were forcibly emancipated. The whole [illegible] framed, and with the express design to [illegible] the National Government from pleading that a citizen was the [illegible].

The [illegible] now showing it [illegible] to the [illegible] August [illegible] Convention.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]