

XXXIXTH CONGRESS—FIRST SESSION.

[CLOSURE OF YESTERDAY'S PROCEEDINGS.]

SENATE.—Mr. Brown (Mo.) reported without amendment, the bill to reimburse the State of Missouri for moneys expended for the United States in enrolling, equipping and provisioning militia forces to aid in suppressing the rebellion. It provides for the appointment of a commissioner to ascertain the amount so expended since August 24, 1861. It contemplates the payment of troops called out by the Government at the request of the governor, or commander of the department commander. It proposes a reduction of the direct tax assessed upon the State from the aggregate amount of \$10,000,000 to \$5,000,000.

Mr. Pomeroy (Kan.) introduced a bill to revive and extend the provisions of an act granting the right of way and making a grant of land to the States of Arkansas and Missouri to aid in the construction of a railroad from a point upon the Ohio river, opposite its mouth, by way of Little Rock, to the Texas boundary near Fulton in Arkansas with branches to the States of Mississippi and Louisiana. Such an enactment was made in 1853, and this bill proposes to extend the provisions of that act for ten years, and reserves the public lands so granted to the State of Arkansas for railroad purposes or other internal improvements which may remain unsold. It was referred to the Committee on Public Lands.

Mr. Wade (Ohio) presented the joint resolution of the Ohio Legislature against the assumption of the war debt of the several States, which was referred to the Committee on Reconstruction.

Mr. Wade (Ohio) presented a petition from colored people of Arkansas, asking for political equality with the white race. Referred to the Committee on Reconstruction.

Mr. Chandler (Mich.) presented the petition of manufacturers of agricultural implements, asking for a reduction of excise duties. Referred to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. Sumner (Mass.) presented the memorial of the colored delegation that recently waited on the President, protesting against the passage of the bill to amend the act in relation to the representation. Ordered to be printed and referred to the Committee on Reconstruction.

Mr. Trumbull (Ill.) presented a petition for equal rights and the abolition of distinction on account of color among soldiers of the United States army.

Mr. Nesmith (Ind.) presented a petition for an increase of the pay of military officers, which was referred to the Military Committee.

Mr. Ramsay (Miss.) presented on the Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads, a bill for the erection of a bridge across the Mississippi at St. Louis.

Mr. Wilson (Mass.) asked leave to call up the bill to fix the military peace establishment of the United States.

Mr. Stewart (Nevada) asked leave to call up the bill for the admission of Colorado.

Mr. Conness (Cal.) asked leave to call up the bill to amend the act in relation to the military bill.

Mr. Wilson (Mass.) said there was pressing need for action on the Military bill. There were many who were entitled to their discharge, and ought to be discharged, but could not well be dispensed with until the regular army was reorganized.

Mr. Sumner (Mass.) was sure the Colorado bill could not be disposed of in the morning hour. It would certainly lead to discussion.

Mr. Stewart thought it was due to the Senators and Representatives elect from Colorado to dispose of this bill as soon as possible.

Mr. Lane (Kansas) appealed to Mr. Wilson to let the Colorado bill come up.

Mr. Wilson said from what he had learned he knew the Colorado bill would lead to a fight.

Mr. Lane said the only question in the Colorado bill was the admission of a hundred negroes to the citizenship of the State.

Mr. Sumner said it was a great question whether a hundred persons should be shut out from the right of suffrage on account of color. It was a little question as to whether Mr. Lane's might be little to him, but it was a great principle to the country. It was also a question whether Colorado had a population to warrant the admission of two Senators here to put her on an equality with New York and Pennsylvania.

Mr. Lane (Kansas) said it does not come with very good grace from the Senator from Massachusetts to say to me that I regard this as a little question. One who has devoted eleven years of his life to the cause of freedom ought to be secure from such an imputation as that.

Mr. Sumner—I only used the Senator's words.

Mr. Lane (Kansas)—I used no such language.

Mr. Sumner—Then I misunderstood the Senator.

Mr. Lane (Kansas)—I only said that the question was as to granting suffrage to a hundred blacks in Colorado, and that question was being discussed day by day upon this question pending before the Senate.

Let me say to the Senator from Massachusetts that the question of negro suffrage is as important to me as to him. It occupies and absorbs me as much as it does him. I have occupied me for eleven long years. We may differ, and I presume we will, as to the manner of granting that right, and as to the time of granting it, but as to the great question of giving to any man, twenty years of age, the right of suffrage in this Union, that question is as important to me as to him.

Mr. Sprague and Grimes spoke of the bill for the increase of the regular army as of more importance to the country than the Colorado bill.

Mr. Stewart demanded the yeas and nays on the question of taking up the Military bill, but afterwards withdrew the demand, and the Senate voted to take it up.

The bill to establish and fix the military peace establishment of the United States, as reported by the Military Committee on Thursday last, was taken up and read.

The morning hour having expired, the pending amendment to the Constitution on the subject of representation was taken up.

Mr. Williams (Oregon) took the floor. He did not believe that the States were in the Union in the sense that New York is in it, nor out of it in the sense that Canada and Mexico are out of it. The relations which ought to subsist between a government and the States had been disturbed as regards the Southern States. He did not say as a matter of fact that all the people of the Southern States were traitors, but majority of them did seize upon the State government and make it the mere incorporation of the individual traitors of the State. There were two kinds of traitors, political and legal. When Satan was overthrown by force, he attempted to accomplish his object by guile and deceit, and it seemed to him the rebels of the South, having been overthrown in the field of war, were following the example of their great prototype, Satan. They were seeking to accomplish under amnesty what they could not do under arms in the field. These States, he said, whether in or out of the Union, were not entitled to the rights and privileges of other States.

Mr. Stewart (Nevada) asked him if he thought the State of Tennessee ought to be included among the States that had forfeited their rights.

Mr. Williams said he would come to that presently. He proceeded to discuss the validity of the secession ordinances. Whether constitutional or not, they were operative, and had the same effect as if constitutional. A parallel case was the legal tender law. The constitutionality of that law has been questioned, but still it had furnished means for carrying on the war, just as if there had been no question as to its legality. So with the ordinances of secession. Whether valid or not, they severed for a time the connection between the Government and the States. They were practically operative in these States, and, pursuant to them, State governments were organized in eleven States, which organized a war that made the nation tremble from its centre to its circumference. Mr. Williams next discussed the alleged obligation of the Government to pay the rebel debt. He denied any such obligation, saying that there would be no justice in it, and there would be no precedent for it. Commenting on the speeches of Messrs. Conness and Little, he said the lately rebellious States were in the hands of Congress to do just what it thought best for the welfare of the country. He denied that the Government was organized in eleven States, which organized a war that made the nation tremble from its centre to its circumference. Mr. Williams next discussed the alleged obligation of the Government to pay the rebel debt. He denied any such obligation, saying that there would be no justice in it, and there would be no precedent for it. Commenting on the speeches of Messrs. Conness and Little, he said the lately rebellious States were in the hands of Congress to do just what it thought best for the welfare of the country. He denied that the Government was organized in eleven States, which organized a war that made the nation tremble from its centre to its circumference.

Speaking of the President's policy, he said that from the first, President Johnson's action showed that he regarded the Southern States as out of the proper relation to the Federal Government. He did not think that the President was to be criticised, though he doubted his power to re-organize State governments as Commander-in-Chief of the army. He thought there was too much objection in the public mind to the subject of reconstruction. Time had a great deal to accomplish, which time alone could do. It took seven years after the last British flag went down before the Government was formed, and Congress was now being denounced for not admitting the conspirators in the late war to seats in Congress. It is due, he said, to the magnitude of the work to proceed cautiously in this great work. He cordially endorsed the prevailing sentiment of Mr. Sumner's speech, but he did not believe Mr. Sumner's proposition was practicable at the present time.

He believed if the negroes were admitted to vote immediately they would be controlled by the rebels. He did not believe the negroes of the South were fit to vote now. They must have time to learn. But he hoped the day was not far distant when every man born on American soil would be admitted to the elective franchise. He objected to Mr. Henderson's amendment because it would prevent States from excluding Indians from the right of suffrage. Mr. Henderson said Mr. Sumner was mistaken. Indians were not citizens of the United States, and therefore could not vote. They were especially declared not citizens by a law recently passed.

Mr. Williams said the law referred to was so meant, but that might be repealed at any time; whereas this was a constitutional amendment, designed to be permanent. Mr. Williams then endorsed the proposition of the Committee on Reconstruction as the best measure before the Senate.

In conclusion he referred to the President's policy. He gave great credit for pure and patriotic motives, but without violating any rule of propriety, he thought he might be allowed to entertain the opinion that the President had made a mistake in the unlimited exercise of the pardoning power. The South had not acted in good faith. It had shown hatred and enmity and could not be trusted. It seemed as if there was nothing that would touch the hearts of the Southern people except the irresistible power of the Government. It might be well to have a man of experience visit Tennessee, and allow her to be represented in Congress, and see whether loyal men would control the State, and whether the white people would treat negroes as equals. Mr. Williams was very sorry, he said, to have heard the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. Guthrie) say, the other day, that that Freedom's Bureau bill was intended to dissolve the Union. This was the gentleman who had reported in the Chicago Convention a resolution declaring the war a failure.

Mr. Guthrie said Mr. Williams had misunderstood his remarks. He had said that the Freedmen's Bureau bill and the Civil Rights bill were being used to accomplish the purpose of the late Convention resolution referred to had only declared the war a failure up to that time.

Mr. Williams concluded his remarks.

Mr. Hendricks (Mo.) took the floor, but said he was not prepared to speak to-day, and the further consideration of the subject was postponed until to-morrow.

Mr. Clarke (N. H.) called up the bill to prevent and punish kidnapping, which was passed. It provides that if any person shall kidnap or carry away any negro or mulatto, with the intent that he shall be sold into slavery; or if any person shall knowingly entice any person to go on board any vessel or any place, with the intent that he shall be sold into slavery, he shall be punished by a fine not more than five thousand dollars, or by imprisonment not to exceed five years, or both. The second section punishes the master of any vessel transporting such kidnapped person and forfeits the vessel.

Mr. Harris (N. Y.) called up a bill to relinquish the title of the United States to certain lands within the city limits of San Francisco, which was passed. Adjourned.

House.—The House resumed the consideration of the bill reported yesterday from the Committee on the Post Office and Post Roads, providing that the Postmaster General may, whenever in his official or public service shall require, until June 30th, 1868, deposit postage stamps and stamped envelopes with such persons as he may select, for sale to the persons with whom stamps and stamped envelopes are so deposited, shall be authorized to sell and circulate the same under the instructions of the Postmaster General, and give bond in such sum as the Postmaster General may direct, with one or more securities conditioned for the faithful keeping of the stamps and stamped envelopes so intrusted to them, and for the payment to the Post Office Department in such manner as directed by the Postmaster General of the moneys arising from the sale thereof.

The second section provides that the Postmaster General may allow to such depositors a commission not exceeding five per centum on all sales of stamps and stamped envelopes. Such persons shall be deemed receivers and custodians of public money. They shall not sell stamps or stamped envelopes on credit, but shall sell them in ready money to the States treasury notes at a price not exceeding the price fixed by law. They shall be subject to all the pains, penalties, fines and forfeitures now provided in connection with the sale and circulation of public money, and of postmasters and other persons to whom the sale of stamps and stamped envelopes is intrusted.

Mr. Kasson moved to strike out the second section of the bill. The first section, he said, would accomplish all that was desirable as there were stockholders and others who would be glad to make their places of business depositories in view of attracting an increased number of customers.

Mr. Alley (Mass.) did not think the amendment would improve the bill, the object of which was to enable the people of the South to procure postage stamps at the current rates, without being compelled to

buy them at great expense. The bill was merely for business purposes, to increase the revenue of the Department, and would do no harm to the individual or section of country. The bill was a measure for the interests of the government, and in behalf of freedom and humanity. If it were otherwise, no man appreciated more than himself the danger of any legislation which would bring back into this hall men who have never acknowledged their allegiance to the government, for he held that no man who stood in that position should be intrusted with the power in favor of granting all facilities necessary to promote the interest of the people of the South. He felt no hostility to these people as a body. They suffered everything a people ought to suffer for their transgressions, and still he had nothing but sympathy for these people, as he had pity for all mankind, he felt that those who sent the people into rebellion—the leaders—deserve and ought to receive all the torments of the damned.

[Several cries of "Amen."] This bill, he repeated, was framed only in the interests of the government, and which granted additional mail facilities to all the people of the South.

Mr. Kasson said his proposed amendment to legislate for the South and elsewhere, while it saved the government the expense of paying five per centum for the sale of stamps.

Mr. Alley said the people of the North were supplied now.

Mr. Washburne (Ill.) wished to know whether it was proposed to pay five per centum to the States for stamps.

Mr. Alley replied in the affirmative, but that the sale was to be confined to such localities as might be designated by the Postmaster General.

Mr. Stevens inquired whether it was not intended to give men of the South who cannot take the oath required of postmasters, an opportunity to obtain stamps, and get five per cent. for doing so.

Mr. Alley replied that the whole object of the bill was to give the people of the South the same facilities as those of the North, and that the bill was not intended to give men of the South who cannot take the oath required of postmasters, an opportunity to obtain stamps, and get five per cent. for doing so.

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