

XXXIXth Congress—First Session.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—PROCEEDINGS.

SENATE.—The bill to authorize the construction of a bridge across the Mississippi at Quincy, Ill., was resumed.

Mr. Henderson offered an amendment, which was adopted, providing for the construction of a bridge at Hannibal, Mo.

The bill, as amended, was then passed.

The bill making appropriations for the support of the Postoffice Department for the ensuing year was called up.

Mr. Trumbull (Ill.) offered the following as an amendment to the bill: "No person exercising or performing any duties or any official which by law is required to be filled by the advice and consent of the Senate shall, before confirmation by the Senate, receive any salary or compensation for his services, unless he be commissioned by the President to fill up a vacancy which has during the recess of the Senate, and since its adjournment, happened by death, resignation or expiration of the term."

Mr. Johnson (Md.) opposed the above as an infringement upon the appointing power of the President.

Mr. Trumbull did not think the right of the power of removing from office was understood in his amendment. According to a statement of the Postoffice Department, Congress to provide that officers appointed by and with the advice and consent of the Senate should be removed only by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

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Mr. Davis—I will state what I did say, and what I believe. It is made the duty of the President to communicate to Congress from time to time, and recommend for its consideration, such measures as he shall deem proper. The position that I assumed was that, before the President could exercise that office he would have to ascertain what bodies of men constituted the Congress. If there were four bodies of men of them concluding that they were the Senate, and the other two concluding that they were the House, then the President must necessarily decide which body constituted the House and which the Senate; that was a necessity, and that it was his plain constitutional prerogative and right to determine, under such a state of the case as that, which was the true Senate and which was the true House.

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The last section is as follows: That so much of the joint resolution passed on the 17th day of July, 1862, entitled "A resolution explanatory and to suppress the insurrection," to punish treason and rebellion, to confiscate the property of rebels, and for other purposes, as is contained in the proceedings under it shall be construed as to work a forfeiture of the real estate beyond his life, shall be repealed, so far as it refers to the seizure and forfeiture of enemy's property.

Mr. Stevens asked leave to offer a resolution reciting the fact that the President had answered the resolution of the House, of March 10th, inquiring as to the number of pardons granted, and the amount of forfeited property restored to rebel owners, and requesting the President to communicate such information at his earliest convenience, it being needed for purposes of legislation.

Mr. Ross objected.

Mr. Hilditch (Nebraska) introduced a bill appropriating part of the proceeds of internal revenue in the territory of Nebraska for the purpose of erecting a penitentiary at Lincoln, in the territory of Nebraska, and for completing the Capitol at that territory. Read twice and referred to Committee on the Territories.

Also, a bill to provide for the construction of a wagon road from Omaha, Nebraska, to Virginia City, Montana territory, which was referred to the same committee.

Mr. Ashley, of Nevada territory, presented a resolution to the Legislature of Nevada, in relation to building a military road from Mint at Carson City, and to mail service and to mining districts in the eastern portion of Nevada, which were appropriately referred.

Mr. Malley (California) presented a bill to claims for horses turned over to the Government. Read twice and referred to the Committee on Military Affairs.

Mr. Howard (Ohio), which was adopted, requesting the Committee on Military Affairs to inquire into the propriety of providing by law that whenever any person is convicted of a crime, and is sentenced to imprisonment, he shall be tried by a court martial for any alleged offence, and the finding of the court shall be that he is not guilty, the President shall issue a writ of habeas corpus, and a certificate of acquittal to the accused who shall then be released from arrest and confinement.

Eight (Cal.) offered a resolution, which was adopted, reciting the allegations in responsible public journals and elsewhere that in the enforcement of the revenue laws at New Orleans, Louisiana, frauds had been committed on the United States, and that frauds had been committed in the enforcement of the internal revenue laws, in the adjustment of claims for the violation thereof in those States, and instructing the Committee on Public Expenditures to inquire into all such alleged frauds, and to sit as a jury to determine whether or not such number, not exceeding three, of such committee as may be deemed advisable.

Mr. Briggs (Mich.) offered a resolution, which was adopted, directing the Secretary of State to furnish the House with a list of the claims of citizens of the United States pending in the U. S. Legation at Caracas against the Government of Venezuela, and to state what measures are required to bring such claims to a speedy settlement.

Mr. Loan introduced a bill directing St. Joseph, Missouri, and instructing the Committee on Commerce.

Mr. Blow introduced a bill to allow the extension of the wharf at St. Louis, and twice and referred to the Committee on Military Affairs.

Messrs. Darling and Ward presented a resolution in relation to New York in favor of equalizing bounties.

Mr. Van Horn (N. Y.) presented a petition signed by 63 citizens of Elba, Genesee county, N. Y., asking an increase of duty on wool.

Mr. Conkling presented a petition of Mrs. Butts and 65 other women of Hopkist, New York, praying for the repeal of the act prohibiting the State from discharging citizens on the ground of sex. Referred to the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. (Iowa) and Randall (Pa.) were excused from the sale of the Finance Committee in reference to the sale of liquors in the Capitol, and Messrs. Grinnell and others were appointed in their places.

On motion the House adjourned.

The House on the State of the Union was discharged from further consideration of the bill came before the House for reconsideration.

Mr. Elliot addressed the House at considerable length, advocating the principle of internal revenue, and explaining the provisions of the bill, and then moved the previous question.

Mr. Ross asked Mr. Elliot to admit an amendment to the bill, in relation to the improvement of the Illinois river, but Mr. Elliot declined, saying that gentlemen around were pressing for amendments.

Mr. Ross then presented a bill, which was referred to the Committee on the Territories.

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27th, 1866.—Hon. James G. Blaine, Esq.—I have to thank you for repelling a vote in the House of Representatives, on the 23d inst., the very extraordinary assault upon me by the Hon. Roscoe Conkling, of New York. It was a defence of me in a forum where I had no opportunity to be heard, and I am glad to see that your assertions touching Mr. Conkling's difficulties with this Bureau are not completely justified by the facts which this letter will disclose.

My official intercourse with Representatives in Congress, during the past three years, has been constant, and in many cases intimate, and with the exception of Mr. Conkling, it has been marked, so far as I remember, by mutual honor and respect. Mr. Conkling being thus an exception, it is my purpose to give a brief summary of his connection and intercourse with this Bureau.

Mr. Conkling made a case for himself by writing to the War Department, and the provost marshal of his district required legal advice, which he was thereupon empowered to give.

Mr. Charles A. Dana, then Assistant Secretary of War, without notifying me, had Mr. Conkling appointed to investigate all frauds in enlistments in West-Point, and to report to the War Department. Mr. Dana vested him by several orders issued in the name of the Secretary of War, without the sanction of Mr. Stanton, with the