The Sunbury American.

H. B. MASSER, Editor & Proprietor.

SUNBURY, PA.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1863.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 9th, 1863.

There is nothing that this war has developed, and it has learned us much, that is so wonderful as the extent of our wealth and great resources. With a war upon our hands that would crush almost any other government, the ordinary pursuits of life are carried on with as much apparant prosperity as ever. In this city all kinds of business is brisk and in a prosperous condition. The only trouble is the scarcity of workmen.

That a good deal of speculation has been engendered, is no doubt true; but that cannot, under the circumstances, be helped, and will correct itself. The great rise in the price of coal, for instance, is an example. The bottom at last fell out, as predicted, and it came down with a crash a day or two since. The result is, coal is dull sale at a decline of 150 per cent. There is a feeling since the elections, that is more healthy and encouraging than at any period since the war. Rebel sympathizers, if not all dead, are, at least, less rampant and noisy. They see that their day has gone by. Copperheadism, under any guise, will not be tolerated by a free and enlightened people.

☞Our Copperhead neighbor makes a number of sorry excuses for his list of blunders and misrepresentations, and imagines himself much more popular than we are. We have only to say, that when we were a candidate, we ran several hundred ahead of our party vote, while he came out several hundred behind.

☞One of the Richmond papers advocates a forced loan, and thinks a forced loan is not a bit severer than a forced conscription. We think not, if the forced loan should not exceed $300 to each individual.—*Northumberland Co. Democrat.*

As the editor and his foreman were both drafted and exempted, and thereby saved six hundred dollars, which many more loyal and better men have paid, they exhibit an utter want of both gratitude and argument in the above copper-colored paragraph. Is it not strange that the rebel conspirators, let them do what they will, always find an apologist in our neighbor.

☞Our neighbor publishes a letter from a College correspondent at Gettysburg, who attempts to describe the ceremonies of the dedication of the National Cemetery. The writer is evidently much in need of the school masters training, and, should not venture as a correspondent of the press, until he has taken a few more lessons on grammar as well as facts. Neither Mr. Everett, the orator, President Lincoln, or Secretary Seward, were of much account in his estimation. His description of Mr. Everett is entirely at variance with our recollection of the man and that of the public. A more graceful, eloquent and finished orator, than Mr. Everett, cannot be found.

☞Mr. Everett, in his speech at Gettysburg, said the rebellion "commenced because for the first time since the adoption of the constitution, an election of President had been effected without the votes of the South."

Was this what caused the rebellion, or was it the triumph of abolition principles, which, they believed, would destroy their institutions?—*Northumberland County Democrat.*

Will our astute neighbor explain the difference? Mr. Seward alledges the cause to have been "the election of a President without the votes of the South." Our neighbor don't and can't deny this fact, but calls that election "a triumph of abolition principles" and therefore justifies the rebels. Is this not the doctrine of every secessionist.

☞The emancipation proclamation, the negro regiment business, the confiscation bill, the suspension of the *habeas corpus*, etc., have exerted both in the North and South, a most unhappy influence in regard to the war. Everybody sees this who is at determined not to see it.—*Northumberland County Democrat.*

That is candid, as well as true, neighbor. The copperheads North and South, have been "most unhappy" in these operations "in regard to the war." The fall of Vicksburg, Port Hudson, Gettysburg and the overwhelming defeat of Bragg's great army in Tennessee, must exert a most unhappy influence—somewhere, but not loyal citizens and true democrats.

☞If the Copperhead, that nominally edits the Lewisburg *Argus*, can get a single decent man in that town, to endorse his low ribaldry and slang, we may condescend to give him further notice. It is, however, perhaps, natural for a blind serpent to show its fangs, when goaded or cornered.

☞Our Copperhead neighbor's squirming will never help him out of the silly blunder he made in stating "that all editors published Telegraphic lies, knowing them to be such." His excuse is not only boyish, but absolutely silly. But neighbor where did you learn to spell "Crockodile.

Army of the Cumberland.

OUR LOSSES AND CAPTURES IN THE LATE BATTLES.

CHATTANOOGA, Dec. 4.

All is quiet in this army.

The expedition to relieve General Burnside is under General Sherman, who has doubtless reached Knoxville.

The most important work now is to reopen the railroad from Bridgeport to Chattanooga, and the work is being pushed with great vigor.

Special despatches say that the rumor of the death of John C. Breckinridge, from wounds received in the late battle is confirmed.

CINCINNATI, Dec. 5.

The *Gazette* has received a despatch from Chattanooga, dated yesterday, which says:—"Everything is quiet along the entire line.

"Our casualties in the late battle, both in killed and wounded, numbered 4500.

"We captured 6100 prisoners and 40 guns."

CONGRESSMEN—Constituents fifty miles off are now financial authority are in circulation. They are made by splitting in and fifty cent notes and sticking halves of each together. The way to guard against them is to look at both sides of all fifty cent notes.

Twenty-five thousand persons are engaged in Peru in obtaining India rubber to supply the Foreign demand.

THIRD ANNUAL MESSAGE

OF

ABRAHAM LINCOLN,

Read in Congress, Wednesday, December 9th, 1863.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 9, 1863.

Fellow-citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives:—Another year of health, and of sufficiently abundant harvests, has passed. For these, and especially for the improved condition of National affairs, our renewed and profound gratitude to God is due. We remain in peace and friendship with foreign powers.

The efforts of disloyal citizens of the United States, to involve us in foreign wars, to aid in inexcusable insurrection, have been unavailing. Her Britanic Majesty's Government as was justly expected, have exercised their authority to prevent the departure of new hostile expeditions from British ports. The Emperor of France has, by a like proceeding, promptly vindicated the neutrality which he proclaimed at the beginning of the contest.

Questions of great intricacy and importance have arisen out of the blockade, and other belligerent operations between the Government and several of the maritime powers; but they have been discussed, and as far as now possible, accommodated in a spirit of frankness, justice and mutual good will.

It is especially gratifying that our prize courts, by the impartiality of their adjudication, have commanded the respect and confidence of maritime powers.

The supplemental treaty between the United States of Great Britian for the suppression of the African Slave Trade, made on the 17th day of February last, has been duly ratified and carried into execution.—It is believed that so far as American ports and American citizens are concerned, that inhuman and odious traffic has been brought to an end.

I shall submit, for the consideration of the Senate, a convention for the adjustment of possession claims in Washington Territory, arising out of the treaty of the 15th of June, 1846, between the United States and Great Britian, and which have been the source of disquiet among the citizens of that now rapidly improving part of the country.

A novel and important question involving the extent of the maratime jurisdiction of Spain on the waters which surround the Island of Cuba, has been debated without reaching an agreement, and it is proposed in an amicable spirit to submit it to the arbitrament of a friendly power. A convention for that purpose will be submitted to the Senate.

I have thought it proper, subject to the approval of the Senate, to concur with the interested commercial powers in an arrangement for the liquidation of the Schedlt dues upon the principles which have been heretofore adopted in regards to the imposts upon navigation in the waters of Denmark.

The long pending controversy between this Government and that of Chili, touching the seizure at Sitania, in Peru, by Chilian officers of a large amount in treasure belonging to citizens of the United States, has been brought to a close by the award of his Majesty, the King of the Belgians, to whose arbitration the question was referred by the parties. The subject was thoroughly and patiently examined by that justly respected magistrate, and although the sum awarded to the claimants may not have been as large as they expected, there is no reason to distrust the wisdom of his Majesty's decision. That decision was promptly complied with by Chili when intelligence in regard to it reached that country.

The joint commission, under the act of the last session, for carrying into effect the convention with Peru on the subject of claims, has been organized at Lima, and is engaged in the business entrusted to it.

Difficulties concerning the inter-oceanic transit through Nicaragua, are in course of amicable adjustment.

In conformity with the principles set forth in my last annual message, I have received a representative from the United States of Columbia, and have accredited a minister to that Republic.

Incidents occurring in the progress of our civil war have forced upon my attention the uncertain state of international questions touching the rights of foreigners in this country, and of United States citizens abroad in regard to some governments. These rights are at least partially defined by treaties. In some instances, however, it is expressly stipulated that in the event of civil war a foreigner residing in this country within the lines of the insurgents is to be exempted from the rule which classes him as a belligerent, in whose behalf the government of his country cannot expect any privileges or immunities distinct from that character. I regret to say, however, that such claims have been put forward, and in some instances in behalf of foreigners who have lived in the United States a greater part of their lives. There is reason to believe that many persons born in foreign countries, who have declared their intention to become citizens, or who have been fully naturalized, have evaded the military duty required of them by denying the fact, and thereby throwing upon the Government the burden of proof.

It has been found difficult, or impracticable, to obtain this proof for the want of guides to the proper sources of information. These might be supplied by requiring the clerks of courts where declarations of intention may be made, or naturalizations effected, to send periodically a list of the names of the persons naturalized or declaring their intention to become citizens, to the Secretary of the Interior, in whose department these names might be arranged and printed for general information. There is also reason to believe that foreigners frequently become citizens of the United States for the sole purpose of evading duties imposed by the laws of their native countries, to which, on becoming naturalized here, they at once repair, and though never returning to the United States they still claim the interposition of this government as citizens. Many alterations of great prejudice have heretofore arisen out of that abuse. It might be advisable to fix a limit beyond which no citizen of the United States residing abroad may claim their interposition of his government.

The right of suffrage has often been assumed and exercised by aliens, under pretences of naturalization, which they have disavowed when drafted into the military service. I submit the expediency of such an amendment of the law as will make the fact of voting as stopped against any plea or other civil obligation on the ground of alienage.

In common with other Western Powers, our relations with Japan have been brought into serious jeopardy through the perverse opposition of the hereditary aristocracy of the empire to the enlightened and liberal policy of the Tycoon, designed to bring the country into the society of nations. It is hoped, although not with entire confidence, that these difficulties may be peacefully overcome. I ask your attention to the claim of the minister residing there for the damages he sustained in the destruction by fire, of the residence of the Legation at Yeddo.

Satisfactory arrangements have been made with the Minister of Russia, which it is believed will result in affording a continuous line of telegraph through that Empire from our Pacific coast. I recommend to your favorable consideration the subject of an international telegraph between the Capital and the National forts along the Atlantic seaboard and Gulf of Mexico. Such communication, established with any reasonable outlay, would be an economical as well as effective aid in the diplomatic, military and naval service.

The consular system of the United States, under the enactment of the last Congress, begins to be self-sustaining, and there is reason to hope that it may become entirely so with an increase of trade, which will ensue whenever peace is restored.

Our ministers abroad have been faithfully defending American rights, in protecting commercial interests. Our consuls have necessarily had to encounter increased labors and responsibilities growing out of the war. These they have, for the most part, met and discharged with zeal and efficiency. This knowledge justly includes those consuls who, residing in Morocco, Egypt, Turkey, Japan, China and other Oriental countries, are charged with complex and extraordinary powers.

The condition of the several organized Territories is generally satisfactory, although Indian disturbances in New Mexico have not been entirely suppressed. The mineral resources of Colorado, Nevada, Idaho, New Mexico and Arizona are proving far richer than has been heretofore understood. I lay before you a communication on this subject from the Governor of New Mexico.

I again submit to your consideration the expediency of establishing a system for the encouragement of emigration. Although this source of national wealth and strength is again flowing with greater freedom than for several years before the insurrection occurred, there is still a great deficiency of laborers in every field of industry, especially in agriculture and in our mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals.—While the demand for labor is thus increased here, tens of thousands of persons destitute of remunerative occupation, are thronging our foreign consulates and offering to emigrate to the United States, if essential but very cheap assistance can be afforded them. It is easy to see that under the sharp discipline of civil war, the nation is beginning a new life. Honorable efforts demands the aid and ought to receive the attention and support of the government.

Injuries, unforseen by the government and unintended, may in some cases have been inflicted upon subjects or citizens of foreign countries, both at sea and on land, by persons in the service of the United States. As the Government expects redress from other powers when similar injuries are inflicted by persons in their service upon citizens of the United States, we must be prepared to do justice to foreigners. If the existing judicial tribunals are inadequate to this purpose, a special court may be authorized with power to hear and decide such claims of the character referred to as may have arisen under treaties and the public law. Conventions for adjusting the claims of joint commissions have been proposed to some governments, but no definite answer to the proposition has been received from them.

During the past fiscal year the financial condition of the Post Office Department has been one of increasing prosperity, and I am gratified in being able to state that the actual postal revenue has nearly equalled the entire expenditures, the latter amounting to $11,314,206 84, and the former to $11,165,789 59, leaving a deficiency of but $150,417 25.

In 1860, the year immediately preceding the rebellion, the deficiency amounted to $5,656,705 49, the postal receipts of that year being $2,645,722 19, less than those of 1863.

The decrease in 1863 in the actual amount of transportation has been only about 25 per cent., but the annual expenditure on account the same has been reduced 35 per cent. It is manifest, therefore, that the Post Office Department may become self-sustaining in a few years, even with the restoration of the whole service.

The International conference of Postal Delegates from the principal countries of Europe and America, which was called at the suggestion of the Postmaster General, met at Paris on the 11th of May last, and concluded its deliberations on the 8th of June. The principles established by the conference as best adapted to facilitate postal intercourse between nations, and as the basis of future postal convenience, inaugurate a general system of uniform international charges at reduced rates of postage, and cannot fail to produce beneficial results.

I refer you to the report of the Secretary of the Interior, which is herewith laid before you, for useful and varied information in relation to the public lands, Indian affairs, patents, pensions, and other matters of public concern pertaining to his department.

In the course of the session I shall probably have occasion to request you to provide indemnification to claimants where decrees of restitution have been rendered and damages awarded by Admiralty Courts, and in other cases where this Government may be acknowledged to be liable in principle, and where the amount of that liability has been ascertained by an informal arbitration.

The proper officers of the Treasury have deemed themselves required by the law of the United States upon the subject to demand a tax upon the income of foreign consuls in this country. While such a demand may not, in strictness, be in derogation of public law, or perhaps of any existing treaty between the United States and a foreign country, the expediency of so far modifying the act as to exempt from tax the incomes of such consuls as are not citizens of the United States, derived from the emoluments of their office, or from property not situated in the United States, is submitted to your serious consideration. I make this suggestion upon the ground that a country which ought to be reciprocated exempts consuls in all other countries from taxation, to the extent thus indicated. The United States, I think, ought to be exceptionally illiberal to international trade and commerce.

The operations of the Treasury during the last year have been successfully conducted. The enactment by Congress of a National Banking law, has proved a valuable support of the public credit, and the general legislation in relation to loans has fully answered the expectation of its favorers. Some amendments may be required to perfect existing laws. But no change on their principles or general scope is believed to be needed.

Since these measures have been in operation, all demands on the Treasury, including the pay of the army and navy, have been promptly met and fully satisfied. No considerable body of troops, it is believed, were ever more amply provided and more liberally and promptly paid, and it may be added, that by no people were the burdens incident to a great war ever more cheerfully borne. The receipts during the year from all sources, including loans and the balance in the Treasury at its commencement, were $901,125,674 86, and the aggregate disbursements, $895,796,630 65, leaving a balance on the 1st of July 1863, of $5,329,044 21. Of the receipts, there were derived from customs $69,059,643 10; from internal revenue, $37,640,787 95; from direct tax, $1,485,193 61; from lands, $167,617 17; from miscellaneous sources, $3,943,615 35; and from loans, $776,682,261 57, making the aggregate $901,125,674 86. Of the disbursements there were: For the civil service, $23,253,929 68; for pensions and Indians, $4,219,520 59; for interest on public debt, $24,729,846 51; for the War Department, $599,299,660 81; for the Navy Department, $63,211,105 27; for payment of funded and temporary debt, $137,661,605 07, making the aggregate $895,796,630 65, and leaving the balance of $5,329,044 21. But the payment of funded and temporary debt having been made from moneys borrowed during the year, must be regarded as merely nominal payments, and the moneys borrowed to make them as merely nominal receipts. Their amount $181,088,635 07, should therefore be deducted both from the receipts and disbursements. This being done, there remains as actual receipts, $720,036,093 79, and the actual disbursements, $714,709,985 59, leaving the balance as already stated.

The actual receipts and disbursements for the first quarter, and the estimated receipts and disbursements for the remaining three quarters of the current fiscal year, 1864, will be shown in detail by the report of the Secretary of the Treasury, to which I invite your attention.

It is sufficient to say here that it is not believed the actual results will exhibit a state of the finances less favorable to the country than the estimates of that officer heretofore submitted, while it is confidently expected that at the close of the year both disbursements and debt will be found pretty considerable less than has been anticipated.

The report of the Secretary of War is a document of great interest. It consists of

First, The military operations of the year detailed in the report of the General-in-Chief.

Second, The organization of colored persons into the war service.

Third, The exchange of prisoners, fully set forth in the letter of Gen. Hitchcock.

Fourth, The operations under the "Act for Enrolling and Calling Out the National Forces," detailed in the report of the Provost Marshal General.

Fifth, The organization of the Invalid Corps; and

Sixth, The operations of the several Departments of the Quartermaster-General, Commissary General, Paymaster General, Chief of Engineers, Chief of Ordnance, and Surgeon General. It has appeared impossible to make a valuable summary of this report, except such as would be too extended for this place; and hence I content myself by asking your careful attention to the report itself.

The duties devolving on the naval branch of the service during the year, and throughout the whole of this unhappy contest, have been discharged with fidelity and eminent success. The extensive blockade has been constantly increasing in efficiency as the navy has been expanded. Yet on so long a line, it has so far been impossible to entirely suppress illicit trade. From returns received at the Navy Department, it appears that more than 1,000 vessels have been captured since the blockade was instituted, and that the value of prizes already sent for adjudication amounts to over $13,000,000.

The naval force of the United States consists at this time, of 588 vessels, completed and in the course of completion, and of these 75 are iron clad or armored steamers. The events of the war give an increased interest and importance to the navy which will probably extend beyond the war itself.

The armored vessels in our Navy, completed and in service, or which are under contract and approaching completion, are believed to exceed in number those of any other power. But while these may be relied upon for harbor defence and coast service, others of greater strength and capacity will be necessary for cruising purposes and to maintain our rightful position on the ocean.

The change that has taken place in naval vessels and naval warfare since the introduction of steam as a motive power for ships of war, demands either a corresponding change in some of our existing Navy Yards, or the establishment of new ones for the construction and necessary repair of modern naval vessels. No inconsiderable embarrassment, delay and public injury have been experienced from a want of such governmental establishments.

The necessity of such a Navy Yard, so finished, at some suitable place upon the Atlantic sea-board, has, upon repeated occasions, been brought to the attention of Congress by the Navy Department, and is again presented in the report of the Secretary, which accompanies this communication. I think it my duty to invite your special attention to this subject, and also to that of establishing a yard and depot for naval purposes, upon one of the western rivers.

A naval force has been created on those interior waters, and under many disadvantages, within little more than two years, exceeding in numbers the whole naval force of the country at the commencement of the present administration. Satisfactory and important as have been the performances of the heroic men of the navy at this interesting period, they are scarcely more wonderful than the success of our mechanics and artizans in the production of war vessels, which has created a new form of naval power. Our country has advantages superior to any other nation in our resources of iron and timber, with inexhaustible quantities of fuel in the immediate vicinity of both, and available and in close proximity to navigable waters. Without the advantage of public works, the resources of the nation have been governed, developed, and its power displayed in the construction of a navy of such magnitude, which has, at the very period of its creation, rendered signal service to the Union.

The increase of the number of seamen in the public service, from 7,500 men in the spring of 1861, to about 34,000, at the present time, has been accomplished without special legislation, or extraordinary bounties to promote that increase. It has been found, however, that the operation of the draft, with the high bounties paid for army recruits, is beginning to effect injuriously the naval service, and will, if not corrected, be likely to impair its efficiency by detaching seamen from their proper calling, and inducing them to enter the army. I therefore respectfully suggest that Congress might aid both the army and naval services by a definite provision on the subject, which would at the same time be equitable to the communities more especially interested.

I commend to your consideration the suggestion of the Secretary of the Navy in regard to the policy of fostering and training seamen, and also the education of officers and engineers for the naval service. The Naval Academy is rendering signal service in preparing midshipmen for the highly responsible duties which, in after life, they will be required to perform. In order that the country should not be deprived of the proper quota of educated officers, for which legal provision has been made at the naval school, the vacancies caused by the neglect or omission to make nominations from the States in insurrection have been filled by the Secretary of the Navy. The school is now more full and complete than at any former period and in every respect entitled to the favorable consideration of Congress.

During the past fiscal year the financial condition of the Post Office Department has been one of increasing prosperity and I am gratified in being able to state that the actual Postal Revenue has nearly equalled the entire expenditures, the latter amounting to eleven million three hundred and fourteen thousand dollars and eighty four cents, and the former to eleven million one hundred and sixty-three thousand seven hundred and eighty nine dollars fifty-nine cents, leaving a deficiency of but $150,417 25. In 1860, the year immediately preceding the rebellion, the deficiency amounted to $5,656,705 49, the postal receipts of that year being $2,645,722 19 less than those of 1863. The decrease since 1860, in the annual amount of transportation has been only about 25 per cent., but the annual expenditure on account of the same has been reduced 35 per cent. It is manifest, therefore, that the Postoffice Department may become self-sustaining in a few years, even with the restoration of the whole service.

The International Conference of postal delegates from the principal countries of Europe and America, which was called at the suggestion of the Postmaster General, met at Paris on the 11th of May last and concluded its deliberations on the 8th of June. The principles established by the conference as best adapted to facilitate postal intercourse between nations, and as the basis of future conventions, inaugurate a general system of uniform international charges at reduced rates of postage and cannot fail to produce beneficial results.

I refer you to the report of the Secretary of the Interior, which is herewith laid before you, for useful and varied information in relation to the Public Lands, Indian Affairs, Patents Pensions, and other matters of public concern, pertaining to his Department.

The quantity of land disposed of during the last and the first quarter of the present fiscal year was three millions eight hundred and forty-one thousand, five hundred and forty-nine acres, of which 161,711 acres were sold for cash, 1,456,514 acres were taken up under the homestead law, and the residue disposed of under laws granting lands for military bounties, for railroad and other purposes. It also appears that the sale of the public lands is largely on the increase. It has long been a cherished opinion of some of our wisest statesmen that the people of the United States had a higher and more enduring interest in the early settlement and substantial cultivation of the public lands, than in the amount of direct revenue to be derived from the sale of them.

This opinion has had a controlling influence in shaping legislation upon the subject of our national domain. I may cite as evidence of this the liberal measures adopted in reference to actual settlers. The grant to the States of the overflowed lands within their limits, in order to their being reclaimed and rendered fit for cultivation, the grant to Rail Road Companies of alternate sections of land upon the contemplated line of their road; when completed, will largely multiply the facilities for reaching our distant possessions.

This policy has received its most signal and beneficial illustration in the recent enactment granting homesteads to actual settlers. Since the first of January last the before mentioned quantity of one million four hundred and fifty-six thousand five hundred and fourteen acres of land have been taken up under its provisions. This fact and the amount of sales furnish gratifying evidence of increasing settlement upon the public lands, notwithstanding the great struggle in which the energies of the Nation have been engaged and which has caused so large a withdrawal of our citizens from their accustomed pursuits.

I cordially concur in the recommendation of the Secretary of the Interior, suggesting a modification of the act in favor of those engaged in the military and naval service of the United States. I doubt not that Congress will cheerfully adopt such measures as will, without essentially changing the general features of the system, secure to the greatest practicable extent the benefits to those who have left their homes in the defence of the country in his arduous crisis.

I invite your attention to the views of the Secretary as to the propriety of raising by appropriate of legislation a revenue from the mineral lands of the United States.

The measure provided, at your last session for the removal of certain Indian tribes, have been carried into effect. Sundry treaties have been negotiated which will, in due time, be submitted for the constitutional action of the Senate. They contain stipulations for extinguishing the possessory rights of the Indians, to large and valuable tracts of land.

It is propre that the efforts of these treaties will result in the establishment of a permanent friendly relation with such of these tribes as have been brought into frequent and bloody collisions with our outlying settlements and emigrants. Sound policy and our imperative duty to these wards of the Government, demand our anxious and constant attention to their material well being, to their progress in the arts of civilization, and, above all, to that moral training, which, under the blessing of Divine Providence, will confer upon them the elevated and sanctifying influence, the hopes and consolations of the Christian faith.

I suggested, in my last annual message the propriety of remodeling our Indian system. But subsequent events have satisfied me of its necessity. The details set forth in the report of the Secretary will evince the urgent need for immediate legislative action.

I commend the benevolent institutions established or patronized by the government in this District to your generous and fostering care.

The attention of Congress during the last session was engaged to some extent with a proposition for enlarging the water communication between the Mississippi river and the Northeastern seaboard, which proposition, however, failed for the time. Since then upon a call of the greatest responsibility a Convention has been called at Chicago upon the same subject a summary of these views is contained in a memorial addressed to the President and Congress, and which I now have the honor to lay before you. That this interest is one which can not long, will force its own way I do not entertain a doubt, while it is submitted entirely to your wisdom as to what can be done now.

Augmented interest is given to the subject by the actual commencement of work upon the Pacific Railroad, under auspices to favorable to rapid progress and completion, the larger navigation becomes palpable need to the great road.

I transmit the second annual report of the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture, asking your attention to the developments in that vital interest of the nation.

When Congress assembled a year ago the war had already lasted nearly twenty months, and there had been many conflicts on both land and sea, with varying results. The rebellion had been pressed back into reduced limits, yet the tone of public feeling and opinion at home and abroad was not satisfactory.

With other signs, the popular elections, then just passed, indicated uneasiness among ourselves; while much much that was cold and menacing, the kindred words coming from Europe were uttered in accents of pity—that we were to blind to surrender a hopeless cause. Our commerce was suffering greatly by a few armed vessels built upon and furnished from foreign shores and we were threatened with such additions from the same quarter as would sweep our trade from the sea and raise our blockade. He had failed to elicit from the European governments anything hopeful upon this subject.

The emancipation proclamation, which was issued in September, was running its assigned period to the beginning of the new year. A month later the final proclamation came, including the announcement that colored men of suitable condition would be received into the war service.

The policy of emancipation and of employing black soldiers gave to the future a new aspect about which hope and fear and doubt contended in uncertain conflict.

According to our political system, as a matter of civil administration, the general government had no lawful power to effect emancipation in any State, and for a long time it had been held that the rebellion could be suppressed without resorting to it as a military measure.

It was all the while deemed possible that the necessity for it might come, and that if it should, the crisis of the contest would then be presented. It came, and as was intended, it was followed by dark and doubtful days.

Eleven months having now passed, we are permitted to take another review. The rebel borders are pressed still further back, and by the complete opening of the Mississippi river, the country dominated over by the rebellion is divided into distant parts, with no practicable means of communication between them. Tennessee and Arkansas have been substantially cleared of military control and influence, and the citizens in each, owners of slaves and advocates of slavery at the beginning of the rebellion now declare openly for emancipation in their respective States. Of those States not included in the Emancipation Proclamation, Maryland and Missouri, neither of which 3 years ago, would tolerate any entertain upon the extension of slavery into the new territories, only slightly turned to the best mode of removing it within their own limits.

Of those who were slaves at the beginning of the rebellion, full one hundred thousand are now in the United States military service, about one-half of which number actually bear arms in the ranks, thus giving the double advantage of taking to work labor from the insurgent cause, and supplying the place, which otherwise must be filled with so many white men. So far as tested it is difficult to say that they are not as good soldiers as we can ask. No service incurred or endured by soldiers or sailors has earned the gratitude of emancipation and among the black race these instances have been more numerous than in any other class. Contemporary with such examples of public sentiment there is much improved. At home the same measures have been fully discussed, supported, criticized, and denounced; and the annual elections followed are highly encouraging to those whose official duty it is to bear the country through this great trial.

Thus we have the new recruits. The crisis which threatened to divide the friends of the Union is past.

Looking now to the present and future, and with reference to a resumption of the national authority within the States wherein that authority has been suspended, I have thought fit to issue a proclamation, a copy of which is herewith transmitted. On examination of this proclamation it will appear as it believed that nothing is attempted beyond what is amply justified by the Constitution. True, the form of an oath is given, but no man is coerced to take it. A man is only promised a pardon in case he voluntarily takes the oath. The constitution authorizes the Executive to grant or withhold the pardon at his own absolute discretion, and this includes the power to grant on terms as if fully established by judical and other authorities.

It is also proffered that if in any of the States named, a State Government shall be in the mode prescribed set up, such government shall be recognized and guaranteed by the United States, and that under it the State shall, on the constitutional conditions be protected against invasion and domestic violence.

The Constitutional obligation of the United States to guarantee to every State in the Union a republican form of government and to protect the State in the cases stated, is explicit and full. But why tender the benefits of this provision only to a State Government set up in this particular way? This section of the Constitution contemplates a case wherein the element within a State favorable to a Republican Government in the Union, may be too feeble for an opposite and hostile element, external to and even within the State; and such are the cases with which we are now dealing.

An attempt to guarantee and protect a revised State Government constructed in whole or in preponderating part from the very element against whose hostility and violence it is to be protected, is simply absurd. There must be a test by which to separate the opposing elements so as to build only from the sound; and that test is a sufficient liberal one, which accepts as sound, whoever will make a sworn recantation of his former unsoundness.

But it it be proper to require as a test of admission to the political body an oath of allegiance to the Constitution of the United States, and to the Union under it, why not so to the laws and proclamations in regard to slavery? Those laws and proclamations were enacted and put forth for the purpose of aiding in the suppression of the rebellion. To give them their fullest effect there had to be a pledge for their maintenance. In my judgment they have ended and will further and the cause for which they were enlisted.

Nor shall I return to slavery any person who is free by the terms of the Proclamation or by any act of Congress.

For these and other reasons, it is thought best that the support of these measures shall be included in the oath, and it is believed the Executive may lawfully claim it in return for pardon and restoration of projected rights which he has clear constitutional power to withhold altogether or grant upon the terms which he shall deem wisest for the public interest.

To give up this principle would be not only relinquish a lever of power, but would also be a cruel and astounding breach of faith. I may add at this point that while I remain in my present position, I shall not attempt to repeal or modify the Emancipation Proclamation.

It should be observed also, that this part of the oath is subject to the modifying and abrogating power of legislation and supreme judical decision.

The proposed acquiescence of the National Executive in any reasonable and temporary state arrangement for the freed people, is made with the view of possibly modifying the confusion and destitution, which must at best attend all classes by a total revolution of labor throughout whole States. It is hoped that the already deeply afflicted people in those States may be somewhat more ready to give up the cause of their affective, it, to this extent, this vital matter be left to themselves, while no power of the National Executive to prevent an abuse is abridged by the proposition.

The suggestion in the proclamation as to maintaining the political framework of the States on what is called reconstruction, is made in the hope that it may do good without the danger of harm. It will save labor and avoid great confusion.

But why any proclamation now upon this subject? This question is best with the conflicting news that the step might be delayed too long or be taken too soon. In some States the elements for reorganization seem ready for action, but remain inactive apparently for want of a rallying point—a point of action.

Why shall A adopt the plan of B rather than B that of A? And if A and B should agree, how can they know but that the General Government here will reject their plans? By the proclamation a plan is presented which may be accepted by them as a rallying point, and which they are assured in advance will not be rejected here. This may bring them to act sooner than they otherwise would.

The objection to a premature presentation of a plan by the National Executive consists in the danger of committals on points which could be more safely left to further developments. Care has been taken to so shape the document as to avoid embarrassment from this source.

In saying that on certain terms certain classes will be pardoned with their rights restored, it is not said that other classes on other terms will never be included. In saying that a reconstruction will be accepted if presented in a specified way, it is not said that it will never be accepted in any other way.

The movements, by State action, for emancipation in several of the States not included in the Emancipation Proclamation, are matters of profound gratulation.

And while I do not repeat in detail what I have heretofore so earnestly urged upon this subject, my general views and feelings remain unchanged, and I trust that Congress will omit no fair opportunity of adding these important steps to the great consummation.

In the midst of other cares, however important, we must not lose sight of the fact that the war power is still our main reliance—to that power alone can we look, yet for a time to give confidence to the people in the contested regions that the insurgent power will not again overrun them. Until that confidence shall be established little can be done anywhere for what is called reconstruction; hence, our chiefest care must still be directed to the army and navy, who have thus far borne their hardy part so nobly and well; And it may be expected fortunate that in giving the greatest efficiency to these indispensable armies, we do also honorably recognize the gallant men, from commanders to enlisted, who compose them and to whom more than to others the world must stand indebted for the home of freedom disenthralled, regenerated, enlarged and perpetuated.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

DECEMBER 8, 1863.

The Vote for Speaker.

The following is the vote in detail for Speaker of the House of Representatives, at Washington:

FOR MR. COLFAX—Messrs. Alley, Allison, Ames, Anderson, Arnold, Ashley, J. D. Baldwin, Baker, Beaman, Blaine, J. Blair, Blow, Boutwell, Boyd, Brandegee, Brooks, W. J. Brown, A. W. Clark, F. Clark, Clay, Cobb, Cole, Creswell, H. W. Davis, T. T. Davis, Dawes, Deming, Dixon, Donnelly, Driggs, Dumont Eckley, Eliot, Farnsworth, Fenton, Frank, Garfield, Gooch, Hutchins, A. W. Hubbard, J. H. Hubbard, C. J. Hubbard, Jenks, Julian, Kasson, Kelly, F. W. Kellog, O. Kellog, Littlejohn, Long, Longyear, Marvin, McBride, McClurg, McIndoe, S. F. Miller, Moorhead, Morrill, D. Morris, A. Myers, Leonard Myers, Norton, C. O'Neill, Orth, Patterson, Perham, Pike, Pomeroy, Price, W. H. Rosecrans, A. H. Rice, J. H. Rice, E. H. Rollins, Schenck, Schofield, Shannon, Sloan, Smith, Smithers, Spaulding, Starr, Stevens, Thayer, Thomas, Tracy, Upson, Van Valkenburgh, E. B. Washburne, W. B. Washburne, Webster, Whaley, Williams, Wilder, Wilson, Windom, Woodbridge.

FOR MR. COX—Messrs. C. Allen, W. J. Allen, A. C. Baldwin, Bliss, J. S. Brown, Cravens, Dawson, Eden, Edgerton, Eldridge, English, Fink, Harrington, C. M. Harris, Herrick, Holman, Hutchins, Wm. Johnson, Kalbfleisch, Knapp, Law, Le Blonde, Long, Marcy, McDowell, McKinney, Middleton, J. R. Morris, Morrison, Noble, John O'Neill, Pendleton, Perry, Robinson, Rogers, Ross, W. T. Steele, Sweat, Voorhees, Wheeler, C. A. White, J. W. White.

FOR MR. J. L. DAWSON—Messrs. Ancona, Baily, Coffroth, Cox, Dennison, Philip Johnson, Lazear, M'Allister, Wm. H. Miller, S. J. Randall, Stiles, Strouse.

FOR MR. MALLORY—Messrs. Brooks, Grider, Harding, B. Harris, King, J. S. Rollins, Stuart, Wadsworth, Ward and Yeaman.

FOR MR. KING—Messrs. Chandler, Ball, Mallory Radford, Scott, and Fernando Wood.

FOR MR. STEVENS—Messrs. Ganson, Griswold, Kerman, Nelson, Odell, Pruyn, J. B. Steele, and Warfield.

FOR MR. BLAIR, OF MISSOURI—Messrs. Cottman and field.

FOR MR. STILES—Mr. B. Wood.

ADDRESS OF MR. COLFAX.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES: To-day will be marked in American history as the opening of a Congress destined to face and settle the most important questions of the century, and during whose existence the rebellion which has passed its culmination will, beyond all question—thanks to our army and navy and Administration—die a deserved death! Not only will your constituents watch with strictest scrutiny your deliberations here, but the friends of liberty in the most distant lands will be interested spectators of your acts in this greater than Roman forums. I invoke you to approach these grave questions with the calm thoughtfulness of statesmen, freeing your discussions from that acerbity which mars instead of advancing legislation, and with unshaken reliance on that divine power which gave victory to those who formed this Union and can give even greater victory to those who are seeking to save it from destruction from the hands of the parricide and traitor. I invoke you also, to remember that sacred truth which all history verifies, that "they who rule not in righteousness shall perish from the earth." Thanking you, with a grateful heart, for this distinguished mark of your confidence and regard, and appealing to all for that support and forbearance, by the aid of which I feel can I hope to succeed, I am now ready to take the oath of office, and enter upon the duties you have assigned me.

The Department of the South.

BEAUFORT, S. C. Dec. 28, 1863.

On Sunday evening, Nov. 22, a mounted party of 50 men, belonging to Col. Rhett's Regiment, 1st South Carolina Cavalry, was sent, under the command of Capt. Bryant, 5th Maine Volunteers, and Capt. Whitney, 1st S. C. (colored) Volunteers, to release 25 colored people held in grievous Slavery by a man named Hayward, near Pocotaligo, S. C. The expedition was successful. The captives were released and their freedom restored to them. Two Rebel horse soldiers, stationed as pickets, were regularly captured as prisoners of war. These men were members of the 1st South Carolina Cavalry (Rebel). Their comrades, 75 in number, under command of a Major, pursued the retiring party toward the ferry at Barnwell's Island. The negroes received them in ambush, and killed them at no pains, capturing several and compelling them to flight. Obtaining reinforcements and artillery, they reached the rendezvous of colored men with thousands, trained in the South, never doubt. The logic dished into the party in advance of their coming, the fight ensued, one hundred was shot and left with broken legs upon the field. Five others were impaled upon the bayonets of the Union troops, and brought as trophies into their camps.

The gallantry of the negroes on this occasion was manifested not merely by their brilliant bravery, but by the willingness with which they gave up the fruits of victory, in which they had caused to the insurgent to their wounded, and to the non-combatants on their return. In fording the river, two of these number were drowned. Another man, a brave corporal, is missing, and is supposed to be hiding upon hostile soil until he can escape to his regiment. Six of the party were wounded. Capt. Whitney shot an officer, but it is not known accurately who or what rank he was. On Thursday last, during an interview by flag of truce, the Rebels stated that the dead officer was Capt. John C. Calhoun, grandson of that great "Nullifier," whom Gen. Jackson regretted he had not hanged.

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