

The Herald.

CARLISLE, PA.
Friday, March 14, 1862.

BOROUGH ELECTION.

The Republicans of the West Ward, and all others, without distinction of party, who are in favor of the preservation of the Union, and the Constitution and the Enforcement of the Laws, are requested to meet at the public House of John Hancock, and those of the East Ward, at the public House of Joseph Heiser, on Saturday evening the 15th inst., at 7 o'clock, for the purpose of forming Ward tickets, to be supported at the ensuing election. A full turn out is requested.

MANY.

BALTIMORE CONFERENCE.—We have given considerable space to the proceedings of the Baltimore Conference, which derives additional local interest from a spicy discussion which took place on account of a letter written by Prof. Chambers for the *Herald*, in which he made an allusion to the Rev. Dr. Sargent and the Rev. Mr. Slicer as secessionists. Prof. Chambers is a thorough-going Union man, and a high-toned honorable gentleman who would scorn, even by insinuation, to create an impression which he did not believe right, and he has *grit* enough beside to stand by any declarations he may have made on the subject.

SENATOR COWAN.—We hope soon to be able to lay before our readers the admirable speech made by Mr. Cowan, in the U. S. Senate in opposition to the confiscation act, now on the files of the Senate. The question is a very important one, and we are glad to find that Mr. Cowan takes a conservative stand against it.

THE SUFFERINGS OF UNION MEN IN MISSOURI.—A few days ago we were shown a letter from JOHN M. SHAPLEY, formerly of this place, to his father Mr. R. E. SHAPLEY, Sen., giving distressing details of the sufferings to which he and other Union men of Missouri had been subjected by the lawless bands of secessionists who overran that State, in the early part of our National troubles. Here, surrounded with all the comforts of home, and safely removed from the horrors of civil war, we cannot fully realize the condition of those who are liable, at any time, to midnight attacks from armed desperadoes who burn the property, drive off helpless women and children, and perhaps finish their fiendish exploit by hanging their victims on the nearest tree.

Mr. SHAPLEY declares that he would sooner suffer death than again pass through the scenes he has witnessed within the last few months. From the letter we learn, that during his absence from home on the 26th of last July, a party of rebels came to his house, but failing to find him, they took away his horse and left. Finding, on his return, that his life was in danger, he made his escape through the woods to the house of two other Union men, who were in a similar predicament. The three men then started for the Union camp 20 miles distant, hoping to get assistance, but failed in this, and remained at the camp two weeks, fearing to return. Unable to bear the suspense any longer, they ventured back one night to their neighborhood, and reaching the house of a friend, they were informed by the man's wife that within the previous two weeks more than twenty of their neighbors had been killed, and that during all the time her husband had been secreted in a corn field. Being directed to his place of concealment, he informed them that the secessionists were determined to kill them if they could find them, and therefore these men, although within a few miles of their homes, were forced to go back to the camp, uncertain as to the fate of their families. After many hardships Mr. SHAPLEY reached Lacon, Illinois, the residence of his brother-in-law, Mr. CHAMBERS, who subsequently went to Missouri, and succeeded in bringing the family of Mr. SHAPLEY to his home, where they now remain, having lost all their property.

SCHOOL REPORT FOR 1861.—We have received a copy of the Report of the Superintendent of the Common Schools of Pennsylvania for the year ending June 1861, giving full details of the operations of the system, as shown by extracts from the reports of the several county superintendents. We learn from the Report, that the whole number of schools, including the city of Philadelphia, is 12,545—number of Teachers 15,494—number of pupils 600,293—Total cost of the system, \$4,000,000, including the whole amount of tax levied, and appropriation \$2,900,501.60. According to the report of Mr. Millin the Superintendent of this county, there are 193 schools in the county, and 5 yet required, 136 Teachers, of whom 38 are females. Scholars—males 5,367 females, 4,552, average cost of teaching each scholar per month \$9 cents. Total amount of tax levied for schools and building purposes \$14,577.12. The Superintendent states that the prevailing public sentiment in the county is favorable to the schools.

MARTIAL LAW AT RICHMOND.—Jeff Davis has placed Richmond under martial law. All distillation and sale of spirituous liquors is prohibited, and Gen. Winder is charged with the due execution of the proclamation. On last Saturday night, the Hon. John Minor Botts was arrested near Richmond, by order of the Rebel Government, and lodged in McDaniel's negro jail, on the charge of being a Union man. Several additional arrests have been made of those suspected of disloyalty to the abortive Rebel Government, which class of persons seems to be daily increasing.

MARYLAND U. S. SENATOR. The Maryland Legislature have elected the Hon. Reverdy Johnson U. S. Senator from that State. Reverdy Johnson, was among the first public men of the South to identify himself with the Administration in defence of the Union, at a time too, when the Union sentiment was at its lowest ebb in Maryland. His election to the Senate is a gratifying evidence of the regeneration of that State from secessionist feelings, and the determination of the Union party, to preserve her fair fame unimpaired.

THE HONESTED BILL.—The Honorable bill passed by the House of Representatives on Friday provides that, on and after the first of next January, any person 21 years of age, who is a citizen, or who has declared his intention to be such, and who shall enter upon the land and cultivate it for 6 years, shall be entitled to 160 acres; upon the payment of the land office fees and \$10 to cover the expenses of survey. The same privilege is accorded to all men who have been in the military or naval service of the government during the present war.

The Hostility of Party Spirit.

It is very evident from the tone of the *American Unionist*, and other papers of similar proclivities, that it is the design of certain wily leaders of the Democratic party to cripple the Administration of President Lincoln, even at the risk of National defeat if by so doing, they can bolster up their own cause. While declaring publicly their devotion to, and love for, the Union, they are secretly engaged in denouncing the policy of the Administration under the disguise of protecting the public interests and thus play into the hands of the traitors by keeping up an unceasing cry about the "Public Debt," "Taxation," "Fraud," and "Corruption." Where were these virtuous and honest politicians, when eight thousand fraudulent naturalization papers were forged in 1856 and distributed by democratic party hacks, to secure the election of James Buchanan? They knew that by these forgeries Mr. Buchanan was placed in an office which he had neither the talent nor the moral courage to fill; yet we hear no denunciations from them. They are the same men who sustained Mr. Buchanan's infamous Lecompton policy, and the "candle box" frauds of Calhoun in Kansas. When the whole country was ringing with execrations to consequence of the shameless corruptions of Buchanan's administration, where were these public guardians? Why then were they engaged in carefully covering up the tracks of these speculators, that they might escape unwhipped of justice. Truth and honesty were forgotten in the desire to screen their party leaders from public view; and some of the very men who have suddenly loomed up as the special friends of public virtue, were then sucking the life-blood of the Government, out of fat contracts which had fraud written in every line. After so many years of political shining, the conversion is too sudden to be sincere. People are not to be deceived by the hypocritical professions of men who have never denounced corruption when their own party was to be benefited by the rascality; and it is too late in the day for these men to raise the cry of "stop thief," to divert public attention from their own fraud. Let them show their loyalty by sustaining the war until the Union is safe, and after that they may wallow in party politics to their heart's content.

The *Unionist* says, in speaking of the nomination of Gen. Shields to a position in the army, "the old hero's confirmation was bitterly opposed by the abolitionists whose only objection to him was, that he had been a Democratic Democrat;" and that "the simple fact of his having been a member of that branch of our party was sufficient to overbalance all his acts of usefulness." Whether the abolitionists did or did not oppose Gen. Shields, we cannot say, as we are not in the secrets of that organization. We merely wish to enquire of the *Unionist* where Mr. Breckinridge the head of "our party," is now to be found? Rumors say, that he is at the head of an armed "branch of our party," in open rebellion to the Government. If this be so, will the *Unionist* also inform us how far the tail of "our party" sympathizes with the head?

It is unfortunate for the *Unionist* that the venom of party has afflicted the Editor with such an obliquity of vision, that every object he looks at is distorted and he employs an unusual amount of labor in his attempts to induce the people to see things in the same light. The effort is fruitless however, as the community, with singular unanimity, have come to the conclusion that the *Unionist* never publishes the truth except by mistake.

The *Unionist*, with unusual severity says we are "a half starved Carlisle *Herald*." We hardly know whether to be obliged for the compliment or not. On the whole, perhaps it is better to confess to leanness at once, than to follow the example of the editor of the *Unionist*, who is constantly emulating the frog in the fable by trying to swell himself to the dimensions of an ox.

A DEMOCRAT'S CREED.

The Hon. JOSEPH A. WADSWORTH, of Indiana, recently appointed by Gov. Morton to fill the provisional vacancy created by the expulsion of Senator Briggs, delivered a speech in the Hall of the House of Representatives of Indiana, at Indianapolis, on the 25th ultimo. After referring to the circumstances under which the Senatorial appointment had been tendered to him by a Republican Governor, he announced the following summary as containing his present political creed:

"1st. My faith in the strength and perpetuity of this Government is in the vigorous prosecution of the war.
"2d. No party creeds nor platforms until we have the victory.
"3d. In no way would I put down this infamous rebellion, let it cost what lives and what money it may. [Loud Cheers.]
"You can change your laws and your Constitution, but God give you but one country."

We commend this creed to the "prayerful" attention of the Editor of the *Unionist*.

SLAVEHOLDERS AND SLAVES.—The following table exhibits the number of slaves in each of the slaveholding States, according to the census of 1860; the number of slaveholders, and the average number held by each owner, leaving out the fractions:

Number of Slaveholders.	Slaves.	Average to each owner.
Alabama, 425,473	242,541	18
Arkansas, 100,062	6,999	18
Delaware, 1,805	899	2
Florida, 63,809	8,620	18
Georgia, 470,637	23,116	20
Kentucky, 225,490	28,385	16
Louisiana, 312,186	20,000	15
Maryland, 85,382	16,040	20
Mississippi, 470,637	23,116	20
Missouri, 115,616	19,182	6
North Carolina, 328,377	28,208	11
South Carolina, 467,185	25,690	16
Tennessee, 287,112	88,204	24
Texas, 184,058	7,747	8
Virginia, 495,828	56,063	9
Total, 3,099,685	847,625	

The average of the aggregate is eleven and a half to each owner. The average of the whole number in the eleven slaveholding States is thirteen and one-sixth to each holder, while in the non-slaveholding States the average is but five and three-quarters. It further appears from this table that because these 347,000 slaveholders could not look out over thirty millions of *freemen*, they determined to revolutionize the government and set up a country of their own. A pretty mess they have made of it!

Major Samuel D. Sturgis, of the regular army, has been confirmed a Brigadier General, to rank from the 10th of August, 1861, for gallant services on the battle field of Wilson's Creek, where the command devolved upon him on the fall of Lyon.

POSTSCRIPT.—We have just received a letter from a member of Co. A, 7th Regiment Penna. Reserve, Capt. Henderson, which states that they were up camp at Tipton, on Monday evening, and on Tuesday morning they were at Hunter's Mill Station, London & Hampshire Railroad, expecting to move on to Leesburg.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

This State paper which will be found in another column is perhaps one of the most important ever issued, when we take into consideration the magnitude of the subject, and the present condition of the national affairs. The recommendation in the message is based on the fact, that an acceptance of the policy embraced in it would deprive the rebel leaders of all hope that the border States would in any event unite with the Union. It will be observed also that the President sets up no claim of right on the part of the Federal Government to interfere with slavery in the States without their consent; he says:

"Such a proposition on the part of the Federal Government is upholding the right by the Federal authority to interfere with slavery within State limits—referring as it does the absolute control of the subject in each case, to the State and the people immediately interested. It is proposed as a matter of perfectly free choice to them."

The President has taken the right ground—he has indicated a plan for the gradual but effectual abolition of slavery, without doing violence to the Constitution or the rights, or prejudices of slaveholders. In this way slavery was abolished in the North—by a process so gradual that it was scarcely felt. It is to be hoped that Congress will give its hearty assent to the suggestion of the Chief Magistrate, and cooperation to the plan proposed.

So far as we can judge the position of the President is sustained by every conservative Journal in the country. The *N. Y. Journal of Commerce* says:

"We think that the resolution proposed by the President is timely, and its influence will be excellent. Whenever a State shall propose to emancipate her slaves; we regard it as eminently proper that the nation should lend its aid, judiciously to effect the object. The Government of the United States, once the governing power of all the country, forced the institution on unwilling colonies, and it became a part of their social system. Let the whole people, who have in one sense succeeded to the government of the nation, aid in this State that has adopted the measure, and ask for aid in changing slave labor to free labor. This is most right. Hereafter when the principle is established, we can discuss and arrange the amount of aid, and the State which it is to be granted to each State as it shall need it. And each State will decide for itself whether it will ask or accept it."

The message of Mr. Lincoln proposing the adoption by Congress of this important principle is timely, and its influence will be excellent. We should not be surprised to see a few political abolitionists or abolitionist politicians, endeavor to misrepresent the President, and extort from his simple, vigorous, and plain words, a meaning that will never be intended to give them. Already some of this class are declaring that the message proves the President a determined Abolitionist.

THE DIRECT TAX BILL.

The tax bill reported in the House of Representatives on Monday last, provides for the appointment by the President, of a Commissioner of Internal Revenue, with a salary of five thousand dollars. His office is to be divided, as the President may direct, into convenient collection districts, with an assessor and collector to be appointed by the President for each district, who shall have power to appoint such deputies as may be necessary. The bill provides for a duty—On spirituous liquors 15 cts. per gal. On wine and beer 5 cts. per gal. On steam and leaf tobacco 3 cts. per lb. On cigars 5, 10, & 20 cts. per lb. On land and lineal oil, barilla, fluid and crude coal oil 5 cts. per gal. On refined coal oil 10 cts. per gal. On gas per 1,000 cubic feet 2 cts. On Bank Note Paper 5 cts. per lb. On Writing Paper 2 cts. On Printing Paper 3 mills. On Soap 5 cts. On Salt 4 cts. per 100 lb. On Sole Leather 1 cent per lb. On Upper Leather 10 cts. per lb. All other manufactures, 3 per cent. ad valorem. Railroad passengers, 2 mills per mile of travel. Commutation tickets, 3 per cent. Omnibuses, ferries, boats, and horse railroads, 3 per cent. on gross receipts from passengers. On advertisements, 5 per cent. on amount of receipts annually. For use of courts, annually, from \$1 to \$10, according to value. On gold watches 1 per annum. On silver watches 50 cts. On gold plate 50 cts. per oz. On silver plate 3 cts. On billiard tables 50 cts. each. On slaughtered cattle 10 cts. On hogs 5 cts. On sheep 5 cts. On Licenses—Bankers 100 20 Auctioneers 20 Wholesale Dealers 20 Retail Dealers in Liquors 10 Retail Dealers in Goods 10 Pawnbrokers 10 Rectifiers 10 Druggists 10 Hotels, Inns, and Taverns (grand rated according to rental) from \$4 to 250 10 Eating Houses 10 Commercial Brokers 10 Other Brokers 20 Theatres 100 Circuses 100 Bowling Alleys (each alley) 5 Wholesale Peddlers 50 Other Peddlers 50 On Ice Distillers, &c. 20 On incomes, 3 per cent. on all over \$600, deducting the income derived from dividends, &c. which are taxed separately. On railroad bonds and dividends of banks and savings institutions 3 per cent. On payment of all salaries of officers in the civil, military and naval service of the U. S., (including members of Congress) 3 per cent. On legacies and distribution shares of the personal property of decedent persons, (according to the degree of relationship) 10 per cent. And stamp duties on all kinds of legal and commercial papers, all patent medicines, telegraphic messages, and all goods by express.

The bill contains one hundred and five sections, and is one of the longest of any kind ever before prepared, months of preparation having been bestowed upon it. The bill provides that the assessor of each collection district shall divide his district into a convenient number of assessment districts, within each of which, he shall appoint one freeholder to act as assistant assessor. The assessor shall receive, as a compensation, two dollars per day for every day employed in making the necessary arrangements for the valuation, and three dollars per day for every day employed in hearing appeals, and revising valuations, and one dollar for every hundred persons on the list. Each assistant assessor shall receive two dollars per day for every day employed in collecting lists and making valuations, and one dollar for every hundred taxable persons contained in the tax list together with all reasonable expenses for stationery, and ten cents per day for every

execution of their duties.

Each collector is authorized to appoint as many deputy collectors as he may think proper, and the 80th section provides for their compensation as follows:

"That there shall be allowed to the collectors appointed under this act, in full compensation for their services and that of their deputies in carrying this act into effect, a commission of four per centum upon the first hundred thousand dollars, one per centum upon the second one hundred thousand dollars, and one-half of one per centum upon all sums above two hundred thousand dollars, such commissions to be computed upon the amounts by them respectively paid over and accounted for under the instructions of the Treasury Department; Provided, that in no case shall such commissions exceed the sum of \$8,000. And there shall be further allowed to each collector ten cents per mile for each and every mile travelled, and his necessary and reasonable charges, his clerk's salary, his books used in the performance of his official duties, which, after being duly examined and certified by the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, shall be paid out of the Treasury."

TAX ON WHISKEY.

One day, a man, who was rather too fond of the ardent, gave his son twenty five cents, and told him to go and buy a quart of whiskey, and a loaf of bread for breakfast. After the boy had gone some distance, the father took an economical view of things, and calling him back told him to buy all whiskey, bread was too dear. As the new tax bill, lays a tax of 15 cents per gallon on whiskey the probability is that whiskey will become dearer than bread, and consequently less will be used.

It is said that the committee of Ways and Means when preparing a list of articles that would most justly bear taxation, found that the amount of whiskey manufactured by the distillers of the United States, reaches annually 600,000 gallons.

If this is correct, the amount of revenue which would be derived by the Government, at a tax of 15 cents per gallon, according to the synopsis of the tax bill which has been reported to Congress, and which we publish in another part of this paper, would be nine hundred thousand dollars. This will be a sore indication on old toper, and we shall not be surprised to see them go into mourning.

East Baltimore Conference.

The East Baltimore Conference of the M. E. Church, met in Baltimore on the 4th inst. Bishop Ames presiding. Rev. J. H. C. Dool was elected permanent Secretary, and Rev. Thomas B. Sargent, R. D. Chambers and H. S. Mendall assistants Secretaries. After the organization of the Conference the Rev. A. A. Reese D. offered the following preamble and resolutions:

"Whereas, Since the annual session of this body a fearful rebellion has broken out in several of the Southern States, threatening to overthrow the great and most benign Government of the United States; and
"Whereas, The Federal authority has been compelled to use force of arms to suppress said rebellion and to maintain its own supremacy; and
"Whereas, Patriotism is a Christian virtue, taught in the Word of God and enjoined upon us in our twenty third Article of Religion; therefore
"Resolved, First, That as a body of Christian Ministers in Conference assembled, we hereby express our abhorrence of the rebellion now existing within our borders as being treasonable in its origin and character, and intransigent in its aims, and as tending to retard the advancement of civil liberty through the world.
"Resolved, Second, That we hereby approve the present wise and patriotic Administration of the Federal Government in its efforts to defend the plans and to overcome the armed resistance of the so-called Confederate States to a view of maintaining the unity and perpetuity of the Government.
"Resolved, Third, That in our patriotic efforts in the past or present to sustain the Government of our country in her time of trial we have uniformly labored in the range of political teaching, and in the instruction of the people in civilities and sentiments, we regard the pulpit and the press as legitimate instrumentalities.
"Resolved, Fourth, That a copy of the foregoing preamble and resolutions be transmitted to the President of the United States, signed by the President and countersigned by the Secretary of the Conference.

The consideration of the resolutions led to a warm and exciting debate. They were passed finally by a vote of 135 to 16. Each of those who voted in the negative declared that they did so because they considered the introduction of the resolutions inexpedient and not that their love for the Union was less than those voting in the affirmative. The Rev. Mr. Slicer, refused to vote, on the question.

The following gentlemen were appointed a committee on Dickinson's Message—A. A. Reese, John H. Dashiell, B. H. Creever, J. B. Snyder, Thomas Sherlock, A. E. Gibson W. A. Sively.

On the fifth day of the Conference the Carlisle District was taken up when a number of the Elders bore testimony to the zeal and fidelity of Rev. John A. Gore the presiding Elder, whose character was passed. Rev. Mr. Gore then made favorable mention of the Preaches in charge of the several Stations and Circuits, and whose characters were all passed.

Rev. Robert D. Chambers, Professor of Theology in Female College, rose on the President calling for his character, and said that last summer he wrote a letter to the President in which he stated that there were, out of the large number of members of the Conference, about ten who were not loyal to the Government, or at least sympathetic with the Southern Confederacy. The names mentioned in the letter were those of Drs. Slicer, Sargent and Reiley—the latter of whom he represented as having preached a disloyal sermon. The letter was signed by him, and did not correspond to the statement made by Mr. Chambers. He demanded that the letter as written should be produced.

Rev. Mr. Chambers said that the letter containing the above statement was not printed. Rev. Dr. Sargent said that it had been published in an active part in having that part of it suppressed.

Rev. Dr. Sargent desired to ask Mr. Ross if the paper suppressed was not very injurious to his character, and had not been published abroad over the whole land? He asked if it had not been seriously discussed at Carlisle whether to permit him to leave the church there.

Rev. Mr. Ross observed the rumors had reached his charge about the disloyalty of certain preachers, and he said that no man said that as printed in the letter. He said that when the letter was received he never saw any name nor read any portion of it. It was suppressed by the editor. The sentiment of the community was quite strong on the subject, but he said he was willing to stand up for brother Sargent if he would be willing to stand by the flag wherever it had a right to go. [Great applause and stamping of feet.]

Rev. J. H. Torrence objected to continuing the discussion without having the letters which originated it.

Rev. Dr. Sargent desired brother Ross to answer the question if there had not been consultation to prevent him from leaving from the care at Carlisle?

not be published.

He knew that brother Slicer was a good church man, and light sided. Rev. Dr. Sargent observed to Mr. Cheney—You did not know him more than myself. You were associated with me more than with brother Slicer.

Rev. Mr. Cheney—Yes, I knew more of him at Light street. This is the letter which brother Chambers referred to in his remarks, [Handing it to Mr. Chambers who gave it to the President.]

Rev. Mr. Slicer—Is that the letter which was signed by Trebor? To this inquiry an answer was returned in the negative.

Rev. Mr. Slicer then observed that the letter signed by Trebor contained a statement that brothers Slicer and Sargent were rampant secessionists. He desired to get possession of it, and demand the authority of any one to make the assertion.

Rev. Mr. Chambers expressed his readiness, if the Conference would grant him leave of absence, to go up to Carlisle and procure the letter. On the issue of the matter in the letter he was willing to meet Mr. Slicer on the Conference floor. [Great commotion through the Church.]

Rev. Dr. Sargent observing the letter on the table in front of the President, went and endeavored to get possession of it. The President caught hold of it and wanted the letter out of Mr. Sargent's hands. The affair created considerable excitement among the members and congregation. The President said that when he called the name of Rev. Mr. Chambers he had no knowledge of what he was going to say.

Rev. Mr. Sargent apologized for his action in taking the letter out of the possession of the President, and observed that he wished to know if the handwriting of the letter was his? He designed no disrespect by his action.

The President remarked that he was aware that the act had been committed while he was in a room sitting in cooler moments he would regret it.

Rev. John Lloyd stated that the session had commenced with a storm, and that it had continued in the same stormy state. He proposed that they should follow the example of the Missouri Conference and have the oath of allegiance administered. He thought that the readiest way to solve the present difficulty.

Rev. Mr. Dashiell, in reply, observed that the speaker was an Englishman.

Rev. Kinsay observed that in the case of the Missouri Conference the oath had been administered by the members of the Conference. The proposition was not acted on.

Rev. Mr. Chambers rose and observed that his character had been called for a number of years without any objections having been made thereto. There was no charge against him, but he had thought proper to allude to the letter which he had written to the editor of the Carlisle Herald, in which he made mention of the secessionists, was in full sympathy with the rebellion. He thought so still. He tried his heart to see such men in such work. When Virginia took the stand against the Government of this country his heart was wrenched with grief, and Mr. Slicer refused so to vote, then it proves to me that they are in sympathy with the rebellion.

The President thought that no good would result from allowing such latitude in the remarks of the brethren. He desired that more brotherly love should exist. It was the prerogative of the Conference to prefer the charges against any member whose conduct required it.

Rev. Mr. Slicer said he would not to-morrow prefer charges against Mr. Chambers of lying and slander, as contained in the letter of Trebor.

Rev. Mr. Dashiell hoped that he would not pursue that course.

Rev. Mr. Kinsay said he considered his character as being impugned by the assertion that those who voted in the negative were disloyal.

Rev. Mr. Dashiell, in reply, observed that the various papers, in recording the vote on the resolution, stated that those voting in the negative distinctly disapproved of the disloyalizing their votes, any disloyalty in voting as they did.

Rev. Dr. Sargent stated that he knew most of the contents of the letter, and that the President's table, and that it was an intelligent response to one that the editor had written to him respecting the assertions contained in the letter.

The President here interposed and said that the discussions had proceeded on without any point.

Rev. Mr. Slicer observed that he would demand the production of the letter, when—The President stated that it was necessary for Mr. Slicer if he made any charge based on the letter, to produce it.

Message from the President.

The President to-day transmitted to Congress the following message:

"I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a joint resolution by your honorable bodies which would be substantially as follows:

"Resolved, That the United States ought to cooperate with any State which may adopt gradual abolition of slavery, giving to such State pecuniary aid to be used by such State in its discretion to compensate for the inconveniences, public and private, produced by such change of system.
"If the proposition contained in the resolution does not meet the approval of Congress and the country, there is the end, but if it does command such approval, I deem it of importance that the States and people immediately interested should be at once distinctly notified of the fact, so that they may begin to consider whether to accept or reject it. The Federal Government will do its highest interest in such a measure, as one of the most efficient means of self preservation. The desire of the existing insurrection entertain the hope that this Government will ultimately be forced to acknowledge the independence of some part of the disaffected States, and that all the slave States north of such parts will then say—The Union for which we have struggled being already gone, we now choose to go with the Southern secession. To prevent this of this hope substantially ends the rebellion, and the institution of emancipation completely deprives them of it as to all the States initiating it. The point is not that all the States tolerating slavery would very soon, if at all, initiate emancipation; but that while the offer is equally made to all the more northern shall, by such initiation, make it certain to the more southern that, in no event will the former ever join the latter in their proposed secession. I say initiation, because, in my judgment, gradual and not sudden emancipation is better for all. In the more financial or pecuniary view, any member of Congress, with the census tables and treasury reports before him, can readily see for himself how very small the current expenditures of this war would purchase, at fair valuation, all the slaves in any named State. Such a proposition on the part of the general government sets up no claim of a right, by Federal authority, to interfere with slavery within State limits, and does not deprive the absolute control of the subject in each case to the State and its people immediately interested."

It is proposed as a matter of perfectly free choice with them. In the annual message last December, I thought fit to say—The Union must be preserved, and hence all indispensable means must be employed. I said this not hastily, but deliberately. War has been declared, and expedients to be an indispensable means to this end. The acknowledgment of the national authority would render the war unnecessary, and it would end on once. If, however, resistance continues, the war must also continue, and it is impossible to foresee all the incidents which may attend, and all the ruin which may follow it. Such as may seem indispensable, or may obviously promise great efficiency towards ending the struggle, must be employed. The proposition now made is an offer only. I hope it may be esteemed no offence to ask whether the pecuniary consideration tendered would not be of more value to the States and private persons concerned than are the institution and property lost in the present war. It is published in it is true that the adoption of the proposed resolution would be merely irritatory, and not within itself a practical measure, it is

recommended in the hope that it would lead to important practical results.

In full view of my great responsibility to my God and to my country, I earnestly beg the attention of Congress and the people to this subject.

(Signed) ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

The President's message excited a deep interest in the House to-day. It was evident that a document of such an important character was not generally anticipated. The reading was called for by Mr. Stevens of Pennsylvania, and, on his motion, referred to the Committee of the Whole on the State of the Union in which it will be discussed. Some of the members, not fully understanding it as pronounced from the desk, perused the manuscript at their seats. The subject therein discussed forms to-night a theme of earnest conversations. The message of a similar character transmitted to the Senate was not read.

WAR NEWS.

The news which reached us on Monday from Old Point, as well as from Gen. Banks' division produced no little excitement, and the calm of last week. Our extracts will embrace the most important points leaving out the minor details for which we have no space.

On Saturday last, the men at Old Point were startled by the announcement that the rebel iron clad steamer Merrimack was moving down from Norfolk by the channel in front of Sewall's Point. Signal guns were also fired by the U. S. sloop of war Cumberland and the frigate Congress to notify the Merrimack, St. Lawrence and Housatonic, of the approaching danger, and all was excitement in and about Fortress Monroe.

There was nothing protruding above the water but the flag staff, flying the rebel flag, and a short smoke stack. She came along slowly, and turning into the channel leading to Newport News steamed direct for the Cumberland and Congress, which were lying at the mouth of the James River. As soon as the Merrimack was within range of the Cumberland the latter opened on her with her heavy guns, but the balls struck and glancing off having no effect on her main parts from a popgun, her ports were all closed, and she moved on in silence, but with a full head of steam.

In the mean time the Merrimack was approaching the two frigates on the one side, the iron clad steamer Yorktown and James were coming from the other side, and engaged our frigates on the other side. The batteries and Newport News also opened on the Merrimack and Yorktown and did all in their power to assist the Cumberland and Congress, but the Merrimack, with her superior gun power, was able to resist the attacks of the approaching vessels, and the distance of about one hundred yards ruled the contest. The Merrimack was the only iron clad monster. The shots took no effect, glancing upwards and flying off, having only the effect of checking her progress for a moment.

After receiving the first broadsides of the two frigates she ran into the Cumberland, striking her about midships and literally laying open her side. She then drew off, fired a broadside into the disabled ship and again dashed against her with her iron clad armor and knocking in the Merrimack's side, while she engaged the Congress, which lay about a quarter of a mile distant.

The Congress had, in the meantime, kept up a sharp engagement with the Yorktown and James, having no regular crew on board of her, and seeing the helplessness of resisting the iron clad steamers, at once struck her colors. Her crew had been discharged several days since, and three companies of the Naval Brigade had been on board to man the guns, which could be relieved by the St. Lawrence, which was to have gone up on Monday, to take her position as one of the blockading vessels, at the James River.

On the Congress striking her colors the Merrimack approached and took firm on board all the officers as prisoners, but allowed the crew to escape in the boats. In the meantime, the steam frigate Minnesota, which was on her way up the river, was up to the relief of the two frigates, and did not get up until too late to assist them. She was followed by the frigate St. Lawrence, which was taken in tow by several of the smaller merchant steamers. It is however, rumored that neither of these vessels but the Merrimack, and the two frigates, were captured on board them, and after a short engagement both seemed to be, in the opinion of the pilots, on the point, aground.

The Minnesota, either intentionally or from necessity, engaged the three rebel steamers at about a distance of one or two miles. The St. Lawrence also fired her two bow guns. The St. Lawrence also fired in shot from all her guns that she could bring to bear, and it was the impression of the most experienced naval officers on the point that both had been considerably damaged.

In the meantime darkness approached, though the moon shone out brightly and nothing but the occasional flashing of guns could be seen. The Merrimack was also believed to be aground, when she stood stationary at the distance of about a mile from the Minnesota, making no attempt to attack or molest her.

Shortly after the engagement the Ericsson iron clad steamer Monitor arrived from New York, and immediately went to the assistance of the Minnesota lying aground off Newport News.