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Congressional Proceedings.

In our last we brought up the proceedings of both houses to Friday, the 21st, which was the day the houses adjourned until Monday, the 23d.]

MAINE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Separation.—Mr. Hubbard of Lowell was from the select committee to whom the subject had been referred, reported a bill providing the manner in which the right of citizenship may be relinquished.

The bill proposes to provide that when any citizen, by application in writing to the district court of any district of the United States, or open court, and there to be recorded, shall declare that he relinquishes the character of a citizen, and means to depart out of the United States, he shall be thenceforth considered as having exercised the right of expatriation, and as being no longer a citizen of the United States—that such person shall be held as an alien forever after, and shall not resume the rights of citizenship without going through the same process of naturalization as other citizens.

The bill was twice read and committed. Mr. Cobb of Georgia, from the select committee to whom the subject was referred, reported a bill for the payment of certain militia claims (of 1793 and 1794) of the state of Georgia, which was twice read and committed.

American Manufactures.—Mr. Johnson of Kentucky, offered the following resolution:—Resolved, that the committee of commerce and manufactures be instructed to enquire into the expediency of providing by law for clothing the army and navy of the United States exclusively in American manufactures.

The motion was agreed to. On motion of Mr. McCoy, of Virginia, it was resolved, that the committee on public lands be instructed to enquire into the expediency of increasing the price at which said lands shall be sold hereafter. The resolution was agreed to by a majority of 20 or 30 votes.

Army and Fortifications.—In compliance with the resolution of the House of Representatives requesting the President of the United States to cause to be laid before the House of Representatives a return of the present strength of the Army of the United States, with the distribution thereof among the several military posts, and the information which he may be able to afford respecting the competency of such force to preserve and defend the fortifications, amongst which it is distributed, and to aid in constructing, and to defend such other military works, if any, as it may be in the contemplation of the government to erect, for the more effectual security of the United States and of the several territories thereof; the Secretary of War has the honor to make a return of the present strength of the Army of the United States, with the distribution thereof among the several military posts.

The military establishment as it now stands is sufficiently extensive to keep the fortifications in a state of preservation, but is wholly inadequate to defend them against a regular attack by a force of sufficient strength or skill. To garrison the forts on the maritime frontier alone would require, according to the best information and estimates of this department, more than three our present number, to repel the assaults of such a force. The portion of the army stationed in the neighborhood of fortifications now erecting are employed to aid in constructing them; but only an inconsiderable number has yet been so engaged, owing to its depressed situation. Though not immediately comprehended in the resolution of the House, it is but justice to the army to observe, that it has been employed to a considerable extent, the last year, in the construction of roads, arsenals and other public works connected with the defence of the country.

The existing fortifications are thought to be woefully insufficient in the event of a future war. As the declaration of war is the act of the whole community, justice, honor and humanity require that every portion of the country should, as far as possible, be protected against its ravages. This is among the most sacred duties of the government; and, impressed with its importance, a board of the most skillful officers in our service has been constituted, to examine the whole line of our frontier, and to determine on the position and extent of works that may be necessary to the defence of the country. This great work is not yet completed; and in its present state, it is impossible to speak with any precision as to the extent to which our fortifications ought to be carried. The soldiers will be able to render important aid in constructing the works that may be determined on; but from the composition of the army, they can only come in aid of regular and professed workmen." J. O. CALHOUN.

The detailed and particular statement, accompanying the report, from the adjutant general's office, states the actual number of the present peace establishment at 8,221, including officers.

The report was ordered to lie on the table. **Surviving Revolutionary Soldiers.**—The principal question before the committee of the whole, was on an amendment proposed by General Harrison; which was to strike out the two first sections of the present bill, and insert in lieu thereof other sections, providing that every Revolutionary officer and soldier, who formed a part of the military establishment of the United States at the close of the war, or who previously thereto served not less than three years and received an honorable discharge, shall receive a pension if an officer, of half pay, if a private of five dollars per month, but no officer's pension to exceed the half pay of a lieutenant colonel, &c.

The question on this motion was not taken until the committee rose, reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again, and, the house adjourned.

Tuesday, Dec. 23.

On motion of Mr. Holmes, of Massachusetts, it was resolved, that the committee on the Judiciary be instructed to enquire into the expediency of providing by law for appointing Justices or Conservators of the Peace, or other Magistrates, authorised to enforce the execution of the laws of the United States.

On motion of Mr. Floyd, of Virginia, a committee was appointed to enquire into the expediency of extending the privileges of franking to one person in each of the States and Territories of the United States, who shall be appointed by the Governor or Legislature thereof, for the purpose of distributing the Vaccine Matter, within such State or Territory, and that they have leave to report by bill or otherwise.

Mr. Trimble, of Ky. offered for consideration the following resolution:

Resolved, That the President of the United States be requested to cause to be laid before this House any information he may be able to communicate relative to the imprisonment and detention in confinement of Richard Cowles Mead, a citizen of the United States.

The motion of Mr. T. was agreed to without opposition.

Revolutionary Survivors.—The House having resolved itself into a committee of the whole on the bill concerning the surviving officers and soldiers of the revolutionary war—

The committee of the whole rose about 4 o'clock, and reported the bill as amended.

The House took up the amendments reported by the committee; when various propositions were successively made and discussed to disagree to or amend many of them.

The House having, at length, gone through the amendments, the bill was ordered to be engrossed, as amended, nem. con. and read a third time tomorrow.

Mr. Spencer offered a joint resolution, that the two houses should adjourn on Wednesday, the 24th inst. to meet again on Monday, the 29th inst.

The resolution was twice read, and ordered to be engrossed for a third reading—was subsequently read a third time and passed, by yeas and nays, 84 to 63, and sent to the senate for concurrence; and then the House adjourned.

Wednesday, Dec. 24.

Surviving Revolutionary Patriots.—The bill providing for certain surviving officers and soldiers of the revolutionary army, was read a third time.

A motion was made by Mr. Lowndes to recommit the bill to a committee of the whole House, with instructions "to limit the benefits of the act to soldiers who were enlisted for a term of three years, or for the war, and who did not desert; and to officers who continued in the service of the United States to the conclusion of the war in 1783, or were left out of the service in consequence of some derangement of the army."

The question being stated on thus recommitting the bill, Mr. Edwards moved to amend the said instruction by striking out the words "three years;" and to insert in lieu thereof the words "one year."

And the question being taken thereon, it was decided in the affirmative.

After a considerable debate in which Messrs. Johnson of Ky. Miller, Ogle and Ithen took part, a division of the question being required, it was taken on recommitting the bill, and decided in the negative, yeas 57.

The question was then taken on the final passage of the bill, and decided in the affirmative without a division. And the bill was sent to the senate for concurrence.

On motion of Mr. Drake, of Mass. it was resolved, That the committee of Commerce and Manufactures be instructed to enquire into the expediency of granting bounties to manufacturers who manufacture a given number of yards of woolen and cotton cloths, of a certain width; and that a permanent fund be appropriated for that purpose.

On motion of Mr. Miller, the committee on Post Roads was instructed to enquire into the expediency of altering the post road from Sumpstonville to Columbia, in South Carolina.

The bill for the remission of the duties on the Painting presented by Benjamin West to the Pennsylvania Hospital was taken up in committee of the whole—Mr. Desha in the chair. Mr. Newton, of Virginia, said the object of

the bill under consideration was to remit, to the Pennsylvania Hospital, the duties on a painting, called "Christ in the Temple healing the blind," presented to that institution by Benjamin West. The British government, with a liberality and promptitude that does honor to it, remitted every charge incident to the exportation of the reception of it in this country; and Mr. N. said, he trusted, he met by the government in a spirit not less gracious and liberal. The excellence of this celebrated artist, a musician, the exercise of which belong only to genius of a superior order, and of extensive acquirements, would, he hoped, be acknowledged in such a manner as to manifest the sense this government entertains of the respect shown by him for his nation. The painting, Mr. N. added, is considered as the chief d'œuvre of his pencil. The present is designed as a monument of the love that illustrious man bears his native land. It is also highly complimentary to the taste and judgment of this nation. The painting moreover reflects honor on this country, and exalts its fame, as it is the production of an American. Permit me, said Mr. N. to congratulate my country on her rising fame. The genius and skill displayed by Trumbull, by Stewart, by Vanderlyn, by Sully, by Peale, and many others, secure to each an imperishable fame, and to their country renown. A new epoch has commenced—its progress is auspicious. The Grecian, Italian, Flemish, French and British schools will be rivalled and equalled, in time, by our own. I congratulate those who are endowed with genius, but whose means are too limited to enable them to seek, in distant regions, the acquirements necessary to form and fix their judgment, and to give to their taste the emperors of deficiency and correctness, on the prospect they have of completing their studies in their native land, under political institutions that give to genius full scope and the enjoyment of its creations, and that leave to emulation the influence of developing its powers. The inspiration thus kindled, diffused and made active, will bestow on their works whatever can delight and enchant the mind, and soften and meliorate the heart. Mr. N. asked pardon for this trespass. Had he said less—and less he could not have said—he should not have performed his duty and done justice to his feelings. He hoped the bill would pass unanimously.

The bill was reported to the house, ordered to be engrossed, and subsequently read a third time, passed and sent to the senate.

The house then resolved itself into a committee of the whole, Mr. A. Smyth in the chair, on the "bill by which the right of citizenship may be relinquished."

On suggestion of Mr. Lowndes, that this was a subject of too much import to be acted on with so thin a house, Mr. Robertson, of Ky. (the author of the bill) consented to its postponement, by the committee's rising and obtaining leave to sit again.

And the House adjourned to Monday.

In Senate—Dec. 25.

Mr. Morrill gave notice, that he should tomorrow offer a joint resolution, directing the commissioner of the general land office to furnish each soldier who may receive a patent with a description of the quality of his land, as situated in the field notes of the surveyor.

Mr. Dickerson gave notice, that he should tomorrow introduce a joint resolution, proposing an amendment to the constitution of the U. States, as it respects the election of representatives in congress, and the appointment of electors of president and vice-president of the U. States.

Mr. Noble laid on the table for consideration the following motion: Resolved, That the committee on finance be instructed to enquire what legislative provisions are necessary, if any, to authorize the payment of the three per cent. now due, or that which may hereafter be due, to the state of Indiana, arising from the net proceeds of the sales of the U. States lands lying within the said state, in pursuance of an act of congress of the 19th April, 1816.

The senate then went into the consideration of executive business, (which is always noted on with closed doors) which occupied them until their adjournment.

December 26.

Mr. Campbell, according to notice given, introduced a bill to authorize the state of Tennessee to issue grants and perfect titles on certain entries and locations of lands. Those made pursuant to the laws of North Carolina, before the 25th February, 1790, and recognized by the cession act of that state of 1790, and lying within certain limits. The bill was passed to a second reading.

Mr. Campbell, from the committee on finance, to whom was referred the bill from the other House, to continue the Mint Establishment at Philadelphia, reported the bill with an amendment, (limiting the operation of the act to five years from the 4th of March next.)

December 27.

The resolution of the House of Representatives to adjourn to Monday, was concurred in.

The resolution proposed by Mr. Dickerson, for amending the constitution, so as to provide for the election of Representatives and Electors in the several states, BY DISTRICTS, was read a second time, had committed to Messrs. Dickerson, King, Daggett, Macon and Stokes, to consider and report thereon.

The bill concerning the Mint Establishment was resumed, amended and ordered to be engrossed for a third reading. And the Senate adjourned to Monday.

ETIQUETTE.

FROM THE NATIONAL REGISTER, OF DEC. 15.
The Drawing Room.—The opening of the drawing-room and the course which Mrs. Monroe means to adopt in receiving the ladies of the district and strangers, has for some time past been a subject of much inquiry and debate, if we are not misinformed among the fashionable of Washington. We have ourselves repeatedly witnessed the introduction of this subject upon the tapis, and it has never failed to excite considerable interest and various opinions, and of late the sensation has been considerable on learning that Mrs. M. does not mean to receive visits, but merely to receive company.

We must, in truth, admit that the preponderance of opinion, as far as we have heard is expressed, seems to set more against than in favor of the adoption of this measure; but, perhaps, this is owing to the want of living the subject due attention, and from the warmth with which it is discussed. The question is one in which female pride and prerogative bear so great a part. We are far from advocating the introduction of courtly etiquette and unnecessary ceremonies in our republican institutions, but we shall always uphold and contend for propriety of behavior and respectful conduct. We are far from wishing to decorate or entice Mrs. Monroe, or any other President's wife with royal insignia; but at the same time we hope we have too much justice to ask from the lady of our chief magistrate, a conduct and sacrifice which we should consider as cruel to exact from the wife of any other citizen.

"What!" exclaimed a lady in the height of irritation, "and is Mrs. Monroe about to pursue a course so opposite to that of her predecessor? A course which made her so beloved by us all, and which rendered her so amiable in the eyes of every visitor at Washington. If such be her plans, I answer, for one, she will not hold her popularity long."

Reflecting on this speech, and not wishing that either our chief magistrate or his consort should lose their popularity unjustly, we gave some consideration to the subject, and we began first by tracing, in our mind, the origin of the drawing-room, which led us back to the days of our beloved Washington, when all attempts at introducing a court etiquette for the house of the chief magistrate were ridiculed on republican principles, and on the ground that the respect we should always entertain for the man of the people's choice, would not allow us to govern our deportment toward him as individuals of his family.

However, that this subject had been fully discussed, and conclusions drawn therefrom, a few persons acted in contradiction thereto, and in fact to the very spirit of our government, and attempted to make comparisons between the upper and lower houses, and between the wives of senators and those of representatives, and between them and the wives of the heads of departments, and between these and the wives of citizens. Gen. Washington, to put an end to all these intrigues and cabals, established a law for himself, and Mrs. Washington was instructed to visit the ladies of all the senators, members of the lower house and those of respectable citizens without distinction. This was the origin of the drawing room.

When Mr. Adams succeeded to the presidency the same arrangements were observed, with this difference, that strict attention was paid that no gentleman should be admitted to the drawing room, who had not been previously introduced to the president at his levee. Parties running high at that time, some of the persons about president Adams and his lady gave such decided marks of disapprobation, when certain members of the opposition appeared, that they soon deserted the drawing room and levee, and rendered both arrangements unpopular. This probably introduced the idea that they savored so much of aristocracy, that when the sage of Monticello came into office he abolished both, and with all the deference and respect which we shall ever retain for the acts of that illustrious statesman went, in our opinion, rather on the other extreme. He received any body and every body, in his cabinet, sitting-room, or breakfast-room, whether dressed, or in his morning gown and slippers, just as they happened to call, and he cared not whether they came in boots or shoes, muddy or clean, with a black handkerchief or ornamental cravat.

When Mr. Madison came into power, new arrangements were deemed necessary, and a middle course between General Washington's and Mr. Jefferson's mode was adopted. The levee of the former was abolished, and the drawing room preserved. As at that time the whole population of the district of Columbia scarcely comprised more inhabitants than is now contained in Georgetown, Mrs. Madison, in the bloom of health, and with a constitution capable of supporting any fatigue, commenced her career by visiting all the ladies of our citizens; as also those of strangers who might arrive at the metropolis. With how much address she acquitted herself, and with how much ease "she stooped to conquer," is fresh in our remembrance, and will long continue as a pleasing recollection.

But we must all of us remember, at the same time, how many privations she suffered as our population increased and the influx of strangers augmented. What was begun as a pleasure became a serious and severe duty, and in the end a laborious task. She had commenced, (See fourth page.)