

NATIONAL INDUSTRY.
SPEECH OF HON. J. A. GILMER,
OF NORTH CAROLINA,
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
February 21, 1859.

The House being in the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union—
Mr. GILMER said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: In offering any views in support of the claims of my native State, North Carolina, to a share of the public patronage and disbursement in the establishment of national works, I am at once struck with two important reflections. First, that, of the many millions invested in magnificent Government structures, distributed so much capital among the people where they are erected, and, at the same time, strengthening the hand of commerce and enterprise in their respective localities, and from which all of the sea-board States have derived more or less advantage, the old North State, though one of the most faithful of the thirteen sisters who pledged their jewels, treasure, and honor upon the altar of liberty, and never broke the vow, has yet to be rewarded with the first particle of Government patronage to any respectable degree; and second, and perhaps more astonishing, that mineral wealth of such almost boundless extent, as is proven to exist there, should not long ere this have been called into active use by well-directed individual enterprise. Here are two manifest derelictions of duty of some sort, and should claim the immediate attention of every true son of North Carolina.

The first neglect, I fear, has resulted from the want of proper attention, and vigilance on the part of her Representatives in this floor, who have spent too much of their time upon abstract propositions, in fostering the mere political issues of the day; which, when advanced or tenured of place is to be the result, are never wanting for ardent, if not furious advocates, while the real interests of the constituency, and the State they represent, have been too much neglected. Days, weeks, months, and years, have been wasted or labored away, urging in the political forum, matters wholly abstract and often incapable of even a practical test; and in which fact consists, in many instances, the major part of the apparent dignity and effect of such issues, while real, practical, useful questions, of the development and improvement of the material resources, agricultural, commercial, and mineral, of their State, have been completely overlooked. Now, I do not propose to assign any gentleman for a failure in duty, who has heretofore, or now represents my State, for their reasons for their previous course of legislative action have doubtless been to their satisfaction and sufficient. But, I do propose to ask them, and all others, to unite with me in giving some attention to the real material interests of North Carolina. In fact, I might extend my remarks beyond my purpose, and cease them to apply to many of the other southern States; but, in doing so, I would not only assume the duties of others more competent to do so, but would, at the same time, transcend the courtesy extended to me by the House on this occasion.

Nor can I now do full justice to my State on this important matter, both for the want of time and all the information I could wish, even were I not limited by this particular subject of the establishment of a national foundry, to which I shall advert directly. So immense, and almost boundless, are the mineral and manufacturing resources of North Carolina, that a volume may be filled with their variety, quality, and utility. I speak not now of the gold and silver, existing in such large quantities, and which are so much more actively sought, but I mean to allude more particularly to the more solid, abundant, and, I will add, more valuable deposits of coal and iron.— These are the articles of universal use, which everybody pays tribute to in some shape, and ever must, so long as commerce and agriculture, and their natural offspring, manufactures, are the leading objects of man's attention: I care not who holds the purse, while I hold the articles of indispensable use, such as coal and iron. The former will lose its strings and flow to the latter, as naturally as the magnet is attracted by the poles. Every man who inhabits a house or shelters under a roof, uses, either directly or indirectly, the fabrics or products of coal and iron, and pays for them, in some shape; therefore, every man is a contributor to the use of these great staple minerals. While Spain and other European Powers hold and absorb, as it were, the so-called precious metals, then known both to the Old and the New World, England being possessed of the solid coal and iron, the real precious metals, has drawn the gold and silver of Spain and other countries into her national coffers, where they are yet safely locked up, and are likely to be, while English domestic and commercial policy is observed; and until other nations, equally blessed with like material, shall adopt the same precept and example, of using their best resources, their solid wealth, their coal and iron.

North Carolina is beautifully blessed by Providence with these solid staple minerals of coal and iron, and equally blessed with water-power and other natural elements for bringing them into use, and which must come into use, in spite of present or hitherto neglect. Her water-power, I can almost say, is the best in the universe. Her Yadkin, Ararat, Mitchell's, Fisher's, Dan, Smith, North and South Tow, Caney, Ivy, Swannano, French

Broad, Pigeon, Tuckaseega, Tennessee, Nantahala, Valley, Hiwassee, Watauga, New, Catawba, Uwharrie, Haw, and Deep rivers furnish streams for manufacturing purposes, which will last inexhaustibly, beyond the power of man to consume, so long as the mountains from which these streams flow, shall stand to attest the work and glory of a beneficent Creator. In her French Broad alone is more water-power than in all New England put together, only waiting to be called into use by an industrial enterprise similar to that which has made New England what she is, and I hope will ever be in this particular, to render North Carolina in everything her superior. Over four hundred thousand spindles revolve in Lowell alone, and over ten times their number could be moved by the regular waters of the French Broad alone, without even making an impression on the abundant supply.— Besides the over-abundance of water in the limpid streams of the old North State, they are exempt from the bitter frosts and freezing winters, which come at times the best streams in New England, obstructing their greater utility, while in North Carolina they rarely ever freeze, and are at the same time blessed with an elevated locality, and wholesome mountain atmosphere, rendering her valleys not only safe for man's habitation, but equally desirable.

But iron ores, the best and most abundant, as I have stated, abound throughout the whole State. It would astonish one not familiar, to see or learn their quantity and extent. To attempt to describe their precise locality and extent with minuteness, would lead me into too great detail; but before confining myself to the particular subject designed in these remarks, this much I will say: you may cast your eye on the map of North Carolina, and start with me from the county of Stokes where you have an abundant supply of coal and iron, in immediate proximity to the Virginia and then the Tennessee line, till you reach the Roan mountain, and from thence bear southward till you reach King's mountain, which continually calls to mind much of the heroism of the Revolution; and from thence eastward till you run into the Deep river valley, and you will have traveled over deposits of iron, so abundant, of such superior quality, that not a similar scope of country on the earth can surpass it. Forming, as it were a great reserve treasured up in nature's store-house waiting for the trained hand of the enterprising individual to quietly unlock and use, to the benefit and wealth of mankind, I cannot contemplate the vastness and value of these sinews of wealth and grandeur of my native State without being greatly moved, and long to see the day when a better directed industry and wiser political economy shall, with fostering policy, call them forth, and bid North Carolina be in practical fact what she is by nature designed, one of the best and most extensive iron producing countries in the world.— Once developed, the mines will sustain themselves; and the southern forge and rolling-mill will sustain and meet the southern demand, and every earthen wheel that traverses the State, bearing the products of her soil, will wind their way over iron rails taken from the same soil without the aid of tariffs or protection; and then, indeed, may we talk of and about southern independence.

It has long been a growing conviction on the part of the Government, that a national foundry should be established, not only for the certain supply of a better article of certain kinds of fabrics of iron for naval and military use, but also to improve the system of combining, and the effect of combining, the various descriptions of iron, and other kindred metallic ores. This important subject at once attracted the attention of the present able Secretary of War, upon his installment into office, and in his first annual report he spoke and recommended the subject, in the following earnest and emphatic manner:

"The importance to the public service of establishing a national foundry has been so often brought to the attention of Congress by my predecessors, that nothing but a conviction of its great consequence to the public and private interests of the whole country encourages me to mention it again.

"A well-managed national foundry would very speedily develop and establish facts, which would add immensely to our national wealth. It is scarcely to be credited that, with the infinite variety of iron ores, and their boundless extent in the United States, we should not have yet discovered a mine capable of making the very best gun, or, if such be discovered, that there are no means by which the public service can be benefited by it; but such is the fact.

"A national foundry would serve as a great laboratory at which the quality and value of metals throughout the whole Confederacy would be tested and fixed. Every variety of iron, with its special adaptation to particular uses, would, in a few years, be familiarly known in the country, and individual enterprises would be saved, in experiments, many times the amount which the works would cost; whilst a great national branch of industry might, by this means, receive legitimate and efficient encouragement.

"There is but little doubt that many American iron ores are equal, at least, to those of Norway, and yet the national armories are driven by necessity to purchase from abroad the Norwegian iron for the manufacture of small arms. Choosing to have the best quality of iron, we must go abroad for the best quality of iron. A national foundry would soon teach us to improve the manufacture of iron and we would be saved the mortification of bringing iron from abroad, and the money, too, we have to pay for it.

So soon as I discovered that this subject was again recommended to the attention of Congress, I at once felt convinced that North Carolina was the State, and the Deep river valley the locality, which offered the best facilities for erecting such a work; and when my colleague, [Mr. BRANCH,] at the last session, offered a bill to this effect, I was in hopes the effort would move steadily forward, and that the claims of North Carolina, and the facilities she offered on this subject, would be well considered, and, if well sustained, as I believe they can be, conceded and allowed. But, like most of measures which are of a truly practical and commercial character for a southern State, it has been permitted to linger till it is about forgotten. It is now my purpose to revive the subject, and claim for my State a full and fair hearing in the premises. I premise, then, by saying that the Deep river valley, in the State of North Carolina, is a suitable place for a national foundry, and that the State of North Carolina has peculiar claims for its location within her borders.

What constitutes a suitable place for a national foundry?

1. Minerals and other materials for use in such a work: and of these, principally coal and iron ore.

2. Locality, accessibility to tide-water, and inaccessibility to an enemy in time of war.

3. Climate, and means for subsisting a population of mechanics and workmen.

On the first I can safely say, without disparagement to other places, that the Deep river valley has no superior. It has coal of the best and most abundant quality. It is a bituminous coal, totally free from sulphur, or other noxious element militating against its free use for manufacturing purposes of any description. It is conceded to be one of the best gas coals in the world, and yields the greatest abundance of the best coke for smelting and forge work, and is well adapted for making what is called holla-fires, for heavy wrought-iron work.— Its iron ores, too, are equally superior, embracing every variety. The specular, brown hematite, magnetic, and blue-clay ores, are inexhaustible, and are all bedded together in a narrow compass. And then, over and above any other place known on the continent, the only workable vein of black-band ore interlines the coal-fields themselves; not only so, but are the deepest in thickness and extent ever yet discovered in any country. This is not an assumption, but fact, proven and visible to the inspection of any inquirer. A shaft, lately sunk by one of the companies engaged in operating these mines, to the depth of five hundred feet, discloses no less than upwards of seven feet of coal, and over eleven feet of black-band ore, all confined in a stratum of some forty feet. This is only one spot; but others are equally favored. But this important malleable article of ore, for the purpose of making all of the descriptions of fabrics for war and naval use, cannot be over-estimated, and should give a controlling influence in the selection of the locality for such a national work. With the use of this deposit, exclusively, as yet, found in workable quantities in the Deep river valley, combined with the other and harder ores found in such great abundance, they enable the Government to make every description of iron fabrics, from the hardest steel cannon or shaft, down to the softest loop-band that can be demanded for any part of the naval or military departments.

Several very able and lucid reports have been made by eminent geologists who base their statements upon actual explorations, made with the greatest caution and attention to the facts, among whom I may mention prominent Professors Johnson, Jackson, and Emmons—the latter being the authorized State geologist for North Carolina. From their united opinions and statements in their several reports, the following are some of their conclusions:

1. The coal is of a quality equal to the best Newcastle coal, and the best for making gas, for which purpose it would bring in New York six or seven dollars per ton.

2. It is very easy to work, and free of fault.

3. It is admirably suitable for smelting iron, being free from sulphur.

4. Black-band iron ore overlies and underlies the coal, and can be mined from the same pits and openings.

5. The black-band is in deposits eighteen inches to six feet thick, and of a better quality than any found in Scotland, containing such a large portion of bitumen, and of so peculiar a character that from twelve to sixteen gallons of kerosene oil can be extracted from it while it is being calcined to fit for the blast furnace. Six to sixteen inches is the usual thickness of the black-band iron ore in Scotland.

6. Hematite iron ore, clay-band, and also magnetic iron ores, are in enormous deposits within ten miles of the coal and black-band.

7. Pig iron can be made from the above deposits, of a quality superior to any made in Scotland, in any quantity, and at prices less than in Scotland, the proximity of the minerals to each other more than compensating for the higher wages in mining. Says a practical Scotch iron master, speaking of the Deep river valley:

"I am satisfied that pig iron can be made at a cost of nine dollars per ton in Chatham county, on the banks of the Deep river. One hundred and fifty thousand dollars would suffice to buy enough of mineral land to supply many furnaces with material for some generations. It would suffice to sink the pits, and erect two furnaces on the Scottish principle;

and, as the minerals are the same as in Scotland, the plans ought to be imported from thence. The two furnaces could make four hundred to five hundred tons a week—say twenty thousand tons per annum—at a cost of about ten dollars per ton. (\$200,000.)—Price in New York and Boston varies from twenty-two dollars to twenty-eight dollars per ton."

In addition to these materials, there is fire-clay of best quality, in great abundance, interlining the seams of coal and black-band ore; thus affording, from the same pit or shaft, coal, iron ore, and fire-clay; and the other descriptions of iron ore, to wit, the hematite, specular, and magnetic, being immediately contiguous, leaves nothing to be done but to develop and use them to any extent and in every shape that the Government can wish or require the use of iron.

The second supposed requisite for a suitable site for a national foundry—the "locality, accessibility to tide-water, and inaccessibility to an enemy"—I will briefly state, is advantageously presented in these North Carolina coal fields. The Deep river flows thro' the coal and iron deposits. It is a beautiful stream, highly adapted to slack-water works, which are now being constructed. The distance from the site of the works to the seaboard, or mouth of the Cape Fear river, into which Deep river flows, is only about one hundred and sixty miles; and tide water, to the depth of some twelve feet, comes to within some seventy miles of the place where a national foundry could be advantageously erected. With the slack-water works completed, as they soon will be, besides a railroad to Fayetteville, now under construction, the fabrics for Government use can safely and conveniently be carried out to the adjacent seaports, or borne by railroad; whilst no enemy's fleets can ascend the stream, or an armed force invade the establishment without marching over land a considerable journey; which is about as high security as can be obtained. The locality I claim to be a good one.

Thirdly, climate, and means of subsisting a population of mechanics and workmen. In this respect the Deep river valley certain possesses superior advantages. It forms, indeed, the dividing line between what are peculiarly southern and northern products.— Extending south from the locality of the mines, you traverse the cotton and rice regions where those staples are produced for export to all parts of the world; while, moving towards the north and west from these mineral deposits, you are greeted with a fine wheat, corn, and other vegetable-producing region, adorned with beautiful scenery. In fact, all the staples, either north or south, for the subsistence of workmen, can be commanded in the Deep river valley at the cheapest and most accommodating rates. By way of description, it may be said that these valuable mineral deposits are in "a good land; a land of brooks of water, of fountains, and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley and vines and fig trees and pomegranates; a land of olive, oil, and honey." And besides this, the climate itself is excellent, being elevated and healthy, abounding in fresh water springs of the purest quality. No region is more healthy than that of which I am now speaking.

There is also an abundant supply of oak and all other timber suitable for such purposes as will be needed about a national foundry, within convenient reach. There are also limestone and other suitable materials for practical use in a foundry, in abundance, in the country round about. Then, may I not ask, what more is needed for supplying all the demands requisite for a national foundry? Can as much as I have here attempted to state, be said of any other named locality? It is true, other places may possess some particular articles of material to an equal, and perhaps greater, degree than is to be found in the Deep river valley; but then, can all the materials be found to the same extent, variety, and quality? Till better informed, I assert they cannot; that the same supply and quality of coal, with all the other materials I have enumerated suitable for the making of every description of iron fabric for Government or national use, are yet to be found in such connection in any one place.— And I then ask the question, why will not the Government pay proper deference to a place so suitable and favored by nature, in selecting its site for a national foundry? Why shall not North Carolina number within her borders some one of the Government structures, when she offers at least equal, if not the best, facilities; and derive, in common with her sister States some of the advantages to the trade and commerce of her citizens, resulting from Government expenditures? This latter consideration would not be proper if North Carolina did not offer equal facilities for the erection of a national foundry to any other State or locality; but when it is so clearly demonstrated that she does, I feel authorized to claim for her the full benefit of an equality in the distribution of the public patronage; and I invoke the voice of every Representative she has in this Capitol to unite with me in the demand. I truly regret that the opportunity has not been favorable for my colleague to urge the bill he introduced at the last session, or that better progress could not have been made. But there is yet time and opportunity, and let the future improve it. If it shall be my province to wield a voice in the deliberations which will finally dispose of this question, I shall be found earnest in insisting upon both

the advantages and rights of North Carolina in the premises, I shall keep my eye steadily upon the movements of things in their behalf; and shall not fail to urge for my native State all that is so justly due from this Government to her long-neglected resources, so far as the Government has the right and power to act.

In fact, I wish to see a new era open up in the South generally. I wish to see less fastidious and parade of new-fledged and broken-down politicians, in the shape of so-called southern commercial conventions, and something more practical and available resorted to. There is better, as well as more profitable, work before us than the mere echoing of high-sounding resolutions, without a feasible feature in them, or a possible benefit in their provisions, to the South or anybody else, beyond the fancy of those who pass them. I wish to see our valleys and mountains brought into actual use.— I wish to see our streams studded with mills, whose numberless spindles and looms shall echo back an eternal response to their ever and onward flowing current. I wish to see the blast of the furnace, and hear the strokes of the forge, declaring the fact that commerce and manufactures are in ripe development. I wish to see the mountains of the South, pregnant with the mines of wealth, disgorging their hidden treasures, and furnishing to our prosperity as certain tribute as they afford delightful retreats and abodes to our citizens. In short, I wish to see the South, in fact, what nature has eminently designed her to be, a commercial and manufacturing, as well as an agricultural people. We can then boast of our greatness, because we will then be great and prosperous.

The Fredell Express.
EUGENE B. DRAKE & SON,
EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.
STATESVILLE,
Friday, March 11, 1859.

Persons desiring to risk by MONEY, On deposit or to buy, by taking the Post Master's Receipt, to exhibit, in case the money get lost, Gold Dollars, when sent, should be stuck to the inside of the sheet with sealing-wax or a wafer. Postage stamps taken as usual.

W. A. Jurney, Esq., is our daily authorized agent for Fredell county, to receive subscriptions for the Express and sign receipts in the names of the publishers. He will also attend to making collections for our office generally.

District Convention—Congressman.

We are requested to give notice that a Convention will be held by the Whigs of the Sixth Congressional district, at WINSTON, on the 12TH day of APRIL next, to nominate a Party candidate to represent the district in the next Congress two years.

Shade Trees.

We perceive that the Court-house Square has been improved by transplanting Trees from the neighboring forests. We are pleased with the good taste which has induced this improvement. Will not those owning lots on the principal streets in Town follow the good example, and enhance both the comfort and value of their property by planting Shade-Trees in front? In cases of fire Shade-Trees have been known often to arrest the progress of the flames, and thus save large amounts of property from destruction. The following remarks copied from an exchange will conclude what we have to say upon the subject: "As 'Springtime is coming,' I have thought it was a good time to talk about setting out Shade-Trees, now, for in a few more weeks it will be too late. Do you know of anything which gives more certain proof of good taste, than well-arranged Shade-Trees? And can you not judge of the prosperity of a city, and the taste of individuals, by this test alone? Have you not seen many unpicturesque cottages relieved of its brown appearance by the trees in front? Now, as trees are not expensive, let every man who owns a lot in the city, plant some trees at once. But while I am talking on this subject, allow me to make one or two suggestions: First—select trees not less than three inches in diameter, and straight ones. Next, use great care in arranging them into straight lines; and, lastly, reject the sycamore, and common oak.— Other kinds, such as elm, locust, maple, etc., are the best, or among the best."

Speech of Hon. John A. Gilmer.

The reader will find an excellent Speech of Hon. John A. Gilmer upon the subject of a National Foundry, in to-day's paper. It goes to show more than anything we have yet read upon the subject, the vast internal resources of North Carolina, and which her citizens have so long neglected to make available. North Carolina if peopled with Yankees or English, would, in a short while, get to be the garden spot of the world; for they would not delay in using the necessary energy to bring into active use the vast dormant resources of the State.

Good and Wholesome Laws.

The corporation of Morganton have just had their code of Laws printed at the Express office, and a better code we have not seen. Knowing the energy of Mayor Brown, Morganton, under the government of these Laws will be a "model city."

More Extravagance—Democratic Authority.

In the Senate, the other day, Mr. Pugh, a distinguished Democrat, spoke as follows: "We live under an Administration that makes great professions of retrenchment, and yet the extraordinary increase in the salaries of our ministers abroad, within the last year, ought to arrest the attention of Congress and the country. Until the incoming of the present Administration, it quite sufficed us to have a minister to China of the rank of commissioner, at a salary of \$9,000 per annum;

but the President has appointed a gentleman from Pennsylvania to that office, and elevated him to the rank of envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary, in order to give him \$12,000 a year.

"We got along well enough until within the last few months, with a consular general at Japan, who received a salary of \$6,000. The President has elevated him up to the grade of minister resident, in order to give him \$10,000. We got along until some time in October last, with a minister resident in Austria, at a compensation of \$9,000 a year; but all of a sudden another citizen of Pennsylvania was sent abroad to that mission, and was elevated to the rank of envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary at a compensation of \$12,000 a year. Here are three offices, at a respective increase of their compensation, by the mere fiat of the President, of \$3,000, \$5,000, and \$3,000 per annum.

"Now, sir, if it be that our legislation is of such a character, that this expenditure can be put upon us, annually, by the mere will of the President, it is high time that this business was overhauled. How many more cases might be selected I do not know. I am not aware of anything that has transpired in relation to these countries calling for such increase of the compensation of our ministers. I have heard of no rupture between us and Austria; I have heard of no complication of our difficulties. I rather think it was trouble in the domestic relations, instead of foreign relations, that brought about the increase of salary.

"Sir, in the time when we had a foreign policy worth calling such, old James Monroe, God bless his memory, was minister to five or six countries at once." He did not get anything like the compensation of any of these gentlemen, and he performed his duty ten times better than all of them put together. It is an enormous abuse. It is not to carry on our foreign intercourse. It is to pension personal and political friends."

Great Fire in Memphis.

On the 2d instant, a half square of Memphis on Main street was burnt down, at night, including the printing offices of the Eagle and Enquirer; Avalanché, Ledger, C. Advocate, and Presbyterian Sentinel. Loss \$150,000. Partly insured.

News, &c.

The Washington City Tragedy.

We give in our last a brief account of the shooting of Phillip Barton Key by Hon. Daniel E. Sickles, of New York. We find in the Washington correspondence of the New York Times a full account of this unfortunate affair. After referring to the rumors prejudicial to the character of Mrs. Sickles, which had been circulating for some time in Washington society, the writer says:

"During the whole of the last session of Congress, the tall figure of Key was constantly to be seen in the President's square, opposite Mr. Sickles's Washington residence; and Mrs. Sickles was constantly in his company at all places of public entertainment. In the interval of the Congressional recess, Mr. Key made a short visit to New York, still without exciting any absolute suspicion of impropriety in the mind of Mr. Sickles; although other friends of the unhappy lady, and among them her mother, repeatedly warned her of the fatal precipice on the brink of which she was permitting herself to tread. It was hoped that the affair would come to an end of itself, and that one or both of the parties would, in some way, would perceive the real drift of their conduct in time to avoid its almost inevitable consequences.

But on the resumption of Congress, and the return of Mrs. Sickles to Washington, Mr. Key's attentions, and the scandal consequent upon them, were revived with greater ardor than before. Mr. Key was a particularly noticeable man in point of personal appearance; tall, well-formed, a much more athletic man than Mr. Sickles, and especially fond of exercise on horseback. He rode an iron-gray horse; and scarcely a day has passed since the return of Mrs. Sickles to the capital, on which his name and the name of his riding cap, his well-trimmed mustache, and iron-gray horse might not have been seen two or three times in the course of the morning on the circuit of President's square, or at the door of Mr. Sickles's house, which stands quite alone on the north side of the square, and is a very conspicuous building of white stone. It was but on Tuesday last, that a swift and fearful dream of the whole story seem, that, on visiting Mrs. Sickles, Tuesday being her day of reception, I found Mr. Key there, his horse waiting for him at the door. The rooms were filled with a pleasant company of the day's callers. Mr. Key was in the open window, and Mrs. Sickles herself in her almost girlish beauty, wearing a bouquet of crocuses, the findings of the year, seemed the very incarnation of Spring and youth, and the beautiful promise of life. What is the twilight? what the house that most frank and generous and true? In the early part of the week before last, Mr. Sickles went on to New York. During his absence the busy spies of society observed that the attendance of Mr. Key at his house was even more unremitting than usual. Mr. Sickles returned to Washington on the morning of the 2d inst. He was met by Mr. Key, and from that time up to Friday last, nothing occurred to make the matter of his wife's relations with Mr. Key more than ordinarily prominent in his mind. So far was he from manifesting anything like indignation or jealousy, or suspicion, that he invited Mr. Key to escort Mrs. Sickles, as usual, to Pennsylvania avenue, and I saw that it company with Mr. Henry Wikoff at the theatre on Wednesday night. On Thursday, Mr. and Mrs. Sickles entertained a large party at dinner. Over that gay and brilliant company Mrs. Sickles had taken the house, and Mr. Key, on the next day (the day before yesterday), Mr. Sickles received from some enemy of mankind an anonymous letter; stating with precision so minute as to make suspicion imperative, that Mr. Key had rented a house on Fifteenth street, above K Street, from a negro woman, and that he was in the habit of meeting Mrs. Sickles there twice or three times a week, or oftener. The press, and dress of Mrs. Sickles were accurately described, and the usual time of the interview specified. Accompanied by a friend, Mr. Sickles went to the house designated, and found every statement of an anonymous writer corroborated. Mr. Key had taken the house, and he had constantly met there a lady answering very closely in description to Mrs. Sickles.

Mr. Sickles still clung to the hope that the person who had stooped to the baseness of making such charges under the veil of secrecy, might have thoroughly deceived him, and that Mrs. Sickles was not the lady in question; he accordingly requisited his friend, Mr. George Woodruff, of New York, to watch the place from the window of a house just opposite.

On Saturday no meeting took place, and the woman in charge seems to have stated that none had occurred since the three times on Saturday evening. Mr. Sickles, resolved no longer to play the spy upon his honor, determined to confront his wife directly with

his terrible suspicions. At first Mrs. Sickles strongly denied her guilt; but on her husband's asking her whether, on the Wednesday previous, she had not entered the house on Fifteenth street, in a certain particular dress, and concealed by a hood, she cried out, "I am betrayed and lost!" and swooned away. On recovering her senses, she admitted her guilt, and besought mercy and pardon. Mr. Sickles calmly said he would not injure her, since he believed her the victim of a scoundrel, but that he had a right to a full confession. Two ladies in the house were sent for as witnesses, and in their presence, Mrs. Sickles made a full confession in writing, stating that her connection with Mr. Key had commenced in April last, under Mr. Sickles's roof; but that Mr. Key had since hired the house in Fifteenth street, in which they had constantly met. Mrs. Sickles's confession was made in the midst of the bitterest contrition and misery. Her husband simply asked her to give him back her wedding-ring, and desired her to write to her mother to come and take care of her from his house forever. Mrs. Sickles made no objections, admitting the justice of her punishment in the most affecting language. Her mother will arrive to-morrow to remove her from this fearful scene of guilt, remorse, and blood.

Once having quitted the presence of his wife, Mr. Sickles gave way to the most terrible emotion, and passed the night in a state bordering on distraction—a feeling which was worked into madness this morning on seeing the cause of his misery. Mr. Key, with gay audacity pass opposite the window of his wife's room and wave his handkerchief—the usual signal for assignation.

Asking Mr. Butterworth, who was at his house, to follow him to the spot, in conversation so that he would not get out of sight, he rushed upstairs for his pistols, and quickly following, found Butterworth and Key together, at the corner of Sixteenth street, when the tragedy took place.

On coming up, Sickles walked directly to Key, and said, "You have dishonored my bed and family, you scoundrel—prepare to die!"—at the same time drawing his pistol. Almost simultaneously Key placed his hand inside his vest, and drawing what appeared to be a pistol, but what was really an opera-glass, said, "You had better not shoot!" Sickles, who had been firing, at the same time threw his glass at him. This shot only grazed Key, slightly raising the skin of his side, and he immediately leaped behind a tree to avoid another shot. Sickles followed, and Key, catching his arm, endeavored to prevent him from firing, but Sickles disengaged himself, and fired, when the Key in the upper part of the right thigh, close to the main artery.

Falling on his hip and supporting himself with his hand, he cried, "Murder! don't shoot!" Sickles still following, fired again, with his pistol close to Key, the ball passing through his body below the breast.

In the next moment the report of the pistol and Key's cries startled those in the neighborhood. Mr. Thomas Martin, a Clerk in the Treasury Department, who happened at the moment to be leaving the Club, rushed back, and called out, "Key is murdered!"

Messrs. Doyle, Uplshur and Tidball, who were in the Club at the time, proceeded hastily to the spot, when they found Sickles standing over the body of Key, with his pistol presented at his head, and which he tried twice to discharge, but which snapped both times—and Mr. Butterworth standing by composedly.

On Mr. Doyle's touching Sickles on the shoulder, the latter at once desisted, and turning around, said, "Gentlemen, this man has dishonored my bed." Upon this he took Butterworth's arm, and walking from the spot with the most perfect self-possession, proceeded to Attorney General Black's, and delivered himself into custody.

Mrs. Sickles, adds the correspondent, is about 22 years of age, and has two children. She is of Italian extraction, and is said to be very pretty. Shortly after their marriage Mr. Sickles was appointed Secretary of Legation at London, and in the household of Mr. Buchanan, then American Minister, and in Louisa Society, his bride was the object of much admiration, on account of her charming person and manners. Mr. Sickles is a native of New York city, and represents one of the Districts of that city in Congress. He is about forty years of age, of good presence and graceful manners, and by his abilities has won reputation as a rising leader of the Democratic party in the State of New York. He was originally a printer by occupation. Mr. Key was the son of Francis S. Key, the author of the "Star Spangled Banner." He was a widower with four children.

Terrible Steamboat Disaster on the Mississippi River.

On the 28th Feb., the splendid steamboat Princess, from Vicksburg, for New Orleans, crowded with passengers, when near Baton Rouge on Sunday morning last, took fire and burned to the water's edge.

The passengers were mostly residents of Louisiana and Mississippi. A large number of ladies are among the lost. Among the killed is Samuel Watts, of Virginia. A great many survivors are badly scalded and otherwise injured. The Princess was one of the most magnificent boats on the Mississippi. She and her cargo are a total loss.

The cause of the fearful disaster, which has hurried so many precious souls into eternity, is not certainly known, but it is reported the boat was behind time when she reached Baton Rouge; and the engineer declared he would reach New Orleans by a certain time, or blow up the boat. If this be correct the unfortunate man paid dearly for his rashness. He was cut entirely in two. Besides the killed and missing, about one hundred are wounded—many dangerously.

Cost of Democratic Legislation.

The late Democratic Legislature, says the Raleigh Register, cost the good people of this State in the per diem of members and other expenses at the least all of \$70,000, or within some fifteen thousand dollars of the sum which a few years ago paid all the expenses of the State Government.

A Bill to Establish a Free-Hold Homestead.

Sec. 1 That it shall be lawful for any citizen of this State to file or by her petition in any Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, of the county in which they reside, to have laid off a Homestead not exceeding fifty acres; to include the dwelling house, or a house and lot in any town, the lot not to exceed two acres, nor of a greater value than 500 dollars; whereupon the Court shall appoint three freeholders, who shall lay off and allot to the petitioner, by metes and bounds, the said homestead of fifty acres, if he have so much; if not, all, or in case the petition be for a house and lot in town, the two acres including the dwelling house, by metes and bounds, and return the same under their hands and seals to the next term of said Court.