

### ASTONISHING DISCOVERY.

The *London Journal* of the 27th ult. has a statement of an astonishing discovery which was communicated to the society for the improvement and growth of Flax, held in Belfast. The following extract contains the truth of the matter:

Mr. Owen referred to a discovery which his friend Dr. Hodges would say was worthy of the deepest consideration of every one present. Having heard some time since that from peat there could be produced ammonia, naphtha, soda-ash, oil, spermaceti, and some other substances, he left London for Paris, and called on an eminent chemist there. He had previously been speaking on the subject with a Mr. Reece, also an eminent chemist, who told him that for the expense of £30 he could produce from 100 lbs. of peat chemical results to the value of £148. It was Mr. Reece who referred him to the Paris chemist, and he (Mr. Owen) produced it to him; and repeated the statement of Mr. Reece, as to what he could do with the peat, the former assured him (Mr. Owen) that he really could do all that he had stated in the above document. He then rang a bell, and ordered the results of his experiments to be brought up from his own laboratory, and he (Mr. Owen) saw with his own eyes the spermaceti made, the ammonia, the oil, and the soda-ash produced from peat; and that chemist thought this was the greatest discovery of the age, and one which would eventually convert the greatest curse of Ireland—the bog, heretofore unprofitable, and the greatest obstacle to improvement—into the greatest blessing, and double the fertility of the soil, to an extent that none could estimate. Well he (Mr. Owen) being a man of business, declined to take any or all these statements for granted, and, consequently he got a number of experiments made by Dr. Hodges and his friend Mr. Reece, which were entirely confirmatory of all the statements made by his friend Mr. Reece. But still, not to deceive himself or others, he was determined to have an experiment made on a large scale, and had employed the largest apparatus in use for that purpose; and he rejoiced to tell this meeting, that, on Tuesday last, his experiments had been commenced, and the results were beyond all expectation, for every thing had succeeded to his utmost wishes. [Mr. Owen here handed to the Chairman a sample of the spermaceti so prepared by him, which was minutely examined by his lordship, and a great number of other gentlemen in the room.] He came here also as a friend of Ireland, &c.

### Destructive conflagration.—Burning of R. Hoe & Co.'s Manufactory.

A little before 11 o'clock, last night, a fire broke out in the third story of R. Hoe & Co.'s Manufactory and Depot of Presses and Printing Material, 29 Gold-street, between Johnson and Fulton streets. The flames spread very rapidly, and from the narrowness of the street, and the difficulty of bringing a stream of water to bear on the scene of conflagration, the engines could at first accomplish little. Hose Co. No. 15 and 38 were promptly on the ground, and succeeded by their exertions in saving the buildings on the opposite side of Gold-st., which were several times on the point of taking fire. The flames rose up in broad red sheets from the roof, tinged the clear white lustre of the moonlight for some distance around. The fronts of the houses in the neighboring streets—the massive spire of an Old Dutch Church, and all objects in the vicinity, were flooded with a brilliant glow. As the floors and walls fell crashing inward, clouds of burning sparks shot up into the air. The sound of the falling edifice, as its foundations were mined away by the fierce flames, was most startling; and the crowd of spectators collected in Fulton and John streets several times rushed back in great confusion from the scene of danger. The position of the firemen, wedged in the narrow streets, was very imminent. The buildings adjoining, on the side toward John-street were considerably damaged. The violence of the conflagration was not checked until 1 1/2, and the ruins continued to burn until 1 o'clock. The amount of loss to Messrs. Hoe cannot be accurately ascertained at present, yet it will scarcely fall below \$20,000. The building was principally used as a warehouse for their stock of printing materials, all of which has been destroyed. This is the third or fourth time they have met with a similar loss. A large number of workmen will be thrown out of employment by this disaster, but we presume the business of Messrs. Hoe will suffer but a temporary check, as they have other establishments in operation in other parts of the City. N. Y. Tribune, 7th inst.

### LOCK MAKING IN RALEIGH.

Mr. Joseph Woltering, an enterprising mechanic of this city, has established here the Black-Lock and Gun-Smith business on a large scale. We had occasion to visit his shop a day or two ago, when we were shown a large Lock for the Franklin county jail, just made by himself, out and out; and we do not believe a better one could be made any where. It is so constructed as to bid defiance to all false keys and picking instruments; and when the key is turned, its tremendous spring, which acknowledges no power but that, speaks to the prisoners within, in a language not to be misunderstood, and says to them, "you are there!" Mr. W. makes locks of all sizes and qualities in order, on as good terms as they can be obtained from the North, and we have no doubt that he will find a ready sale for his productions. We make this statement to call public attention to his establishment, because we think home industry should be encouraged.—*Ral. Register*.

### Death of Col. W. R. Johnson.

A telegraph dispatch from Mobile, dated 10th inst., announced the melancholy intelligence of the death of Col. William R. Johnson, in that place on Wednesday last. It is stated that Col. J. was walking about on the day of his death, suffering from influenza, but not considered by any means dangerous.

### Col. Johnson has, for many years, bore the name of the "Napoleon of the Turf," a cognomen applied not so much for the reason that he possessed great knowledge of blooded horses, and was eminently successful in his contests for the numerous purses offered in various parts of the Union, but for his prompt action, and ready and decisive character in general matters. He was mild and unassuming in manners, and the courteous gentleman. His loss will be severely felt.

### A cargo of Rail Road iron arrived at Norfolk, the 3d inst.

intended for the Portsmouth and Roanoke road, which is to be reconstructed.

### ROAD TO THE PACIFIC.

The bill introduced into the Senate by Mr. Benton, to provide for the construction of a railroad from the Mississippi to the Pacific, contemplates a magnificent enterprise. It is proposed to commence at the Bay of San Francisco and to terminate at St. Louis.

A breadth of one mile from the frontier of Missouri to the Pacific is to be reserved for the purpose of laying down at once, one track of railroad—room being left for the other tracks hereafter, and for other sorts of roads. A percentage of the proceeds of the public land sales is to be applied to the construction of the work. It is to be an undertaking by the Government, without the co-operation of individual stockholders. The Government is to build the road, and to own it when built. A branch road is to run to Oregon and to connect with the Columbia river.

Mr. Benton, in submitting this bill, accompanied it by a characteristic speech, able, eloquent and earnest. He will doubtless continue to press it on every suitable occasion; for it is evidently a favorite project with him; his heart is in it. We subjoin the concluding portion of his speech which was delivered in the Senate on Wednesday:—*Balt. American*.

The road I propose is necessary to us, and now. We want it now. The state of our possessions on the Pacific demands it. The time to begin has arrived. All the necessary information is on hand. The means are ready. The title to Oregon is settled, and a government established there, and population is growing up. California is acquired, people are there, and a government must follow. We have a fleet on that coast—troops there, and going. Streams of population are concentrating there. Since the discovery of the New World by Columbus there has not been such an unsettling of the foundations of society. Not merely individuals and companies, but communities and nations are in commotion, all bound to the setting sun—to the gilded horizon of Western America. For want of an American road, they seek foreign routes, far round, by sea and land, to reach by an immense circuit, what is a part of their own land. Until we can get a road of our own we must use and support a foreign route; but that is a temporary resource, demanded by the exigency of the times, and until we can get our own ready. Never did so great an object present itself to the acceptance of a nation. We own the country from sea to sea—from the Atlantic to the Pacific—and upon a breadth equal to the length of Mississippi—and embracing the whole temperate zone. Three thousand miles across, and half that breadth is the magnificent parallelogram of our domain. We can run a national central road, through and through, the whole distance, under our flag and under our laws. Military reasons require us to make it: for troops and munitions must go there. Political reasons require us to make it: it will be a chain of union between the Atlantic and Mississippi States. Commercial reasons demand it from us: and here I touch a boundless field, dazzling and bewildering the imagination from its vastness and importance. The trade of the Pacific Ocean, of the western coast of North America, and of eastern Asia, will all take its track: and not only for ourselves, but for prosperity. That trade of India which has been shifting its channels from the time of the Phoenicians to the present, is destined to shift once more, and to realize the grand idea of Columbus. The American road to India will also become the European road to that region.

The European merchant, as well as the American, will fly across our continent on a straight line to China. The rich commerce of Asia will flow through our centre. And there has that commerce ever flowed without carrying wealth and dominion with it? Look at its ancient channels, and the cities which it raised into kingdoms, and the populations which upon its treasures became resplendent in science, learning, and the arts. Tyre, Sidon, Babel, Palmyra, Alexandria, among its ancient emporiums, attest the power of commerce to enlighten nations. Constantinople, in the middle ages, and in time of the crusades, was the wonder of Western Europe; and all because she was then a thoroughfare of Asiatic commerce. Genoa and Venice, mere cities, in latter time, became the match of kingdoms, and the envy of the kings, from the mere divided streams of this trade which they became the thoroughfare. Lisbon had her great day, and Portugal her pre-eminence during the little while that discovery of the Cape of Good Hope put her in communication with the East. Amsterdam, the city of a little territory rescued from the sea, and the Seven United Provinces, not equal in extent to one of our lesser States, became great in arms, letters, in wealth, and in power; and all upon the East India trade. And London, what makes her the commercial mistress of the world—what makes an island no larger than one of our first class States—the mistress of possessions in the four quarters of the globe—a match for half of Europe—and dominant in Asia? What makes all this, or contributes most to make it, but the same Asiatic trade? In no instance has it failed to carry the nation or the people possessed it, to the highest pinnacle of wealth and power, and with it the highest attainments of letters, arts, and sciences. And so will it continue to be. An American road to India, through the heart of our country, will revive upon its line all the wonders of which we have read—and eclipse them. The western wilderness, from the Pacific to the Mississippi, will start into life, under its touch. A long line of cities will grow up. Existing cities will take a new start.—The state of the world calls for a new road to India, and it is our destiny to give it—the last and greatest. Let us act up to the greatness of the occasion, and show ourselves worthy of the extraordinary circumstances in which we are placed, by securing while we can an American road to India—central and national—for ourselves and our prosperity—central hereafter, for thousands of years to come.

we are pleased to learn that the operations on the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad are now carried on with great regularity and despatch. The mail arrives in good time; and the conveniences for the prompt transit of freight and passengers are deemed ample for the wants of the public. The appropriation made by the last Legislature, with the earnings of the Road, it is believed, will be sufficient to continue its operations, in the same satisfactory manner—though we hope, ere long, to see it renovated, and working like a perfect charm. *Ral. Times*.

### OUR COLONIAL HISTORY.

Whatever air of mystery may have hitherto surrounded the history of North Carolina, during its colonial existence, is dissipated by the discovery of the State and other papers of that period, the publication of which we commence to-day. Whatever as skepticism too as to the important and prominent part our State bore in the transactions of that eventful era, imperfectly communicated to us, it is true, by the oral tradition of our elders, must now be banished before the light of truth. And yet we cannot wonder much at the incredulity of those, who have been slow in acknowledging our prior claims to this intrepid and patriotic movement. That an isolated and limited body of men, with no other reliance than upon the rectitude of their cause, should have abjured all allegiance to a great and powerful Kingdom, in whose hands were the thunderbolts of war and at whose feet was the crushed power of a hundred provinces, is indeed almost incredible. The extraordinary declaration of one of the Resolves, that "they be in full force and virtue, until the legislative body of Great Britain resign its unjust and arbitrary pretensions with respect to America," is full of that patriotic determination which animated the Spartan band of three hundred to contend against the Persian host of old. The North Carolina reader, then superadded, to the emotions with which he ordinarily peruses, the history of the Revolutionary times, will feel his State pride glow more brightly within him at this authentic narrative of the valor, the moral firmness, the unconquerable will of those patriots,

### INTERNAL IMPROVEMENT MEETINGS.

We learn from a gentleman just from Pittsboro, that a large and enthusiastic meeting of the friends of Internal Improvement, of all parties, was held there on Tuesday last, at which Dr. McClanahan presided, to take action upon the improvement of Cape Fear and Deep Rivers, as authorized by the Act of last Session.

The object of the meeting was explained by the Chairman, in an able and satisfactory manner; after which the discourse was addressed by Messrs. Giles Mebane and Hugh Waddell, of Orange, of whose speeches our informant speaks in the highest terms. At the conclusion of Mr. Waddell's speech, on motion of Mr. Haughton, Subscription Books were opened, and upwards of \$50,000 subscribed immediately. The best spirit pervaded, and an interest was manifested, which we can venture to say, renders the completion of this work *cock sure*. Indeed, our friend learned, (and which we have also heard before,) that Mr. Thompson, the Engineer, has offered to take the entire work, in conjunction with Major Gwynn, and finish it for \$185,000; giving bonds for the faithful execution of the contract. The Proceedings of this Meeting will no doubt be published at the proper time but we seize the occasion to hold up the example of the people of Chatham to the imitation of all, in other sections, interested, as they are, in the great works for the improvement of our condition. Put your own shoulders to the wheel—that's the way!—shove with all your might and main!—and then call upon *Hercules* as lustily as you please—and he will be sure to come! Our readers will also find some account of the Meeting in Salisbury on our first page. Some of the worthiest and ablest men were there—among them several members of our late legislature, who assisted in adopting our new system of State policy. We hope their constituents may support and defend them, for they richly deserve it. We shall gladly publish these Proceedings in full, when we receive them. *Ral. Times*.

### COMMUNICATION.

#### THE RECENT LEGISLATURE.

The author of "Protest" is unwilling to believe the "Watchman" in its comments upon his communication, intended to do him the injustice of impugning the honesty of his motives when questioning the wisdom and justice of the acts of the recent Legislature. Yet, it is apparent from the construction put upon them, that his position is not understood, and therefore requiring some explanation. In the first place, he thinks there is a marked difference between a protest against the public acts of the Legislature, and a nullification of them.—The first is intended as an expose of the reasons which govern the minority in not assenting to the acts of the majority, and that the responsibility of them may rest in the proper place. And also, that it may not be inferred that there was a tacit acquiescence in them when quoted, as precedents. It is a constitutional right, and is often exercised in the State and National Legislatures; and has never been productive of mischief, but of good. But the same cannot be said of the second. A spirit of nullification, which abides no decision, and sooner than peaceably acquiesce in the will of the majority, would resolve society again into its original elements. How, then, can the "Watchman" bearing in mind this distinction, properly censure the honest difference of opinion which "Protest" has expressed in his columns. In what other way can the chief end of the public Press be accomplished, but by an exchange of sentiments, and a full investigation of the merits of all measures affecting the rights and interests of society; for if wise and expedient, it will participate in the honor and share in the benefits, and if not, it is equally entitled to be discarded. And more especially would he have observed silence if he had believed his communication would have been construed as intending to undervalue the value, or retard the success of schemes so noble and so vitally important to the State, as the "Watchman" forcibly represents them. He, therefore, takes this occasion to disclaim any such intention, and, in short, to say that having entirely repudiated the spirit and independence of a freeman, when experiencing disappointment in a favorite measure, he shall in future lend his feeble influence in advancing the claims and securing the great benefits which may arise to Western and the whole of North Carolina, by the proposed extensive scheme of Internal Improvements. It may be consistent, but is never wise, when a favorite measure is no more in existence, to undervalue the value of the substitute and retard its success when it may secure greater benefits. He hopes he has too much State pride and patriotism, to oppose any improvement in the State, which is calculated to be beneficial to the State, and which will develop any great interests calculated to add wealth, prosperity and happiness to large classes of his fellow-citizens of the State.

A crisis in the Internal Improvement policy of the State has arrived, and before the intelligence, enterprising and patriotic citizens of the whole State to contribute whatever of influence, talents and knowledge they may possess to effectuate the noble purposes and ends to be accomplished. The time for action upon the several schemes of improvement, has now arrived.—The time to say "yes" or "no" to the measure, and if practicable, must and will have of the people also. Free and full discussion then of the merits, should be sought and encouraged, and the people informed and enlightened upon all the statistical facts pertaining to the mineral, agricultural and manufacturing resources of the State, and the comparative advantages and influence which the Rail, Plank and Turnpike Roads will have upon them.

In fine, meetings of our citizens should be immediately called and held in the several Counties most interested in these projects, and let them ascertain what can and will be done to secure the benefits of these cherished privileges. There is no virtue in delay. Action cannot be deferred, but must advance the success of these enterprises. They can as well be accomplished in two or three years, as five or six; and instant action in all practical schemes the sooner it is made, the more likely will success attend the effort. And in so doing, we will give rise to employment to the large and idle surplus population of the State engaged in the agricultural pursuits which will leave fewer producers in them, and the necessary consequence of which will be, better prices for all kinds of produce and labor. It will also induce the people to improve their lands, and make them more productive when some stimulus and inducement is extended instead of immigrating to new lands in the far West. But I do not intend to go into the merits of these Improvements in this communication, and will, therefore, return to the proposed plan of holding County meetings immediately, that we may ascertain whether associations of individuals will not take one-third of the stock in the grading of the Central Rail Road through their respective Counties, the State paying the other two-thirds in money. In this way, it is believed, the individual stock can be secured, and the Road built without scarcely the possibility of a doubt. For the two-thirds money will pay them better than any other mode of labor, and the State no larger profit arises to an individual for instance in grading one mile of the Road, he has one-third of the cost of that mile as his stock in the Road, and when it is built, his land will have increased more than 30 per cent. in value; and he has a Road to market calculated in distance by land and not by days and miles. A meeting explanatory of this plan has already been held in this village, and it is contemplated that another shall be held in furtherance of it at April Court, at which time something more definite and satisfactory will be done in the premises. And I take this occasion to say in behalf of the citizens of Davidson, that they will do us every service to secure the construction of this Rail Road in proportion as any County in North Carolina. They understand the interests at stake in this enterprise, and are determined to move in the lead, and embrace to the whole State that they are not inattentive to the part and duty assigned them.

In the conclusion of this communication, the author of "Protest" desires "Observer" to understand he has too much respect for himself and his friends, to take offence at the scholastic and quibbling criticism in the last "Watchman" upon his style of composition, and having addressed his remarks to the practical judgment of matter of fact men, and not to book worms which not being better endowed with the intelligence of ideas than those insects, canker upon the words of Crabbe's synonymes to find congenial food. And it perchance, were it one of those Western members who expressed himself "sick and tired of hearing the claims of miserable little Western villages," when liberal minded Eastern gentlemen were willing and disposed to entertain them favorably in the distribution of Legislative favors, that they would be more worthy and respectable citizens living in these villages, as well as mark and put such other notable signs upon him, that he may be known the next time he asks the confidence of these "miserable little villages" to represent their claims at Raleigh. And let him then be told that they desire a "local interval" to suggest to the superintendent that "Observer" was always "in a dol" for want of ideas in his brains, and came in quest of a few particles of words to canker upon, and is, therefore, not a proper subject of mental disease. CODICIL TO PROTEST.

Planet Mercury.—The planet Mercury will be visible for some evenings shortly after sunset, in the W. S. W., nearly midway between the planets Venus and Saturn. Mercury, on account of its proximity to the sun is seldom seen, and many persons have never seen it at all. It appears as a reddish star of the first magnitude. The present opportunity will be the most favorable, for viewing this planet in the evening, in 1849.

#### PRIZE FIGHT.

A prize fight took place in Kent county, Maryland, a few days ago, between Yankee Sullivan and John Hyer. After the 16th round, Hyer was pronounced the victor, he having sustained but little injury, while his antagonist was beaten into a jelly. About a hundred thousand dollars were bet on the issue! We are astonished to learn that such an inhuman species of barbarity is tolerated in Maryland. All the parties ought to be committed to the penitentiary, and an end forever put to such sport. Maryland ought to be ashamed of herself.

#### SEVERAL PEACH BLOSSOMS.

Several Peach Blossoms, which must have blown about the 7th instant, were sent to our office last week.

#### THAT AXE.

The other day I was holding a man by a hand as firm in its outer texture as leather, and his sunburnt face was as inflexible as parchment; he was pouring forth a tirade of contempt on those who complain that they can find nothing to do as an excuse for becoming idle loafers. Said I: "Jeff, what do you work at?" You look hearty and happy: what are you at? "Why," said he, "I bought me an axe three years ago, that cost me two dollars; that was all the money I had. I went to chopping wood by the cord: I have done nothing else, and have earned more than 600 dollars; have drank no grog, paid no doctor, and have bought a little farm in the Hoosier State, and shall be married next week to a girl that has earned 200 dollars since she was eighteen. My old axe I shall keep in the drawer, and buy me a new one to cut my wood with." After I left him, I thought to myself, "that axe" and "no grog!" They are the two things to make a man in this world. How sure of success with the motto "no grog!" And then a farm and a wife, the best of all.

#### JOHN VAN BUREN'S LAST.

John Van Buren met Mr. Fillmore at the time of his last visit to Albany. "What are you going to do for us, Mr. Fillmore, now that you are in office?" said the hopeful heir of honor. "Do for you?" said the Vice President elect, good humoredly. "We shall do nothing—we don't know you." General Taylor will certainly redeem his pledge to us," said John. "Pledge! what pledge?" "The one he gave at Buena Vista, not to leave his wounded behind him."

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#### "IF IT CAN BE BUILT."

If the saying of the poet be true, that "our doubt are traitors," then does the above expression embody treason to the Railroad, we had almost said to the State. "If it can be built!" That's not the sort talk to effect any purpose, except the defeat of the most practicable scheme ever set on foot to redeem the fortunes of our good old State. Suppose every man of us fold our arms, look knowing, shake our heads, and say, "It is a great work—if it can only be built!" Is the "great work" likely to be accomplished under such encouragement? No. And the man who achieves a reputation for sagacity by such remarks, only deserves from his country such reward as is due to those who defeat great and patriotic projects for the good of mankind. But let every man say, "It can be built—it must be built," and what is the consequence? The early construction of the Road. That's the way to talk for effect. Let every citizen be fully persuaded in his own mind—no matter whether he has money, labor, or only the influence of thought and talk to invest in the work; and let him speak of it with a view to the benefit which he may honestly believe it will confer, and of the undoubted practicability of the work—and it will soon be done.—*Greens. Pat.*

#### A telegraphic dispatch received at Baltimore,

dated New-Orleans afternoon of 7th inst., states that there has been a great rise in the waters of the Mississippi within a few days. It was at that time nearly level with the banks in some places, and in others overflowing them. The rise is stated to be greater than ever before known. Measures are being taken to prevent the injury that may result from the overflow. Business was active and prosperous, only retarded by the apprehensions of a freshet and overflowing of the wharves and lower parts of the city. The views of the steamer *Canada* had been received and pretty well digested, since which there have been sales of 5,000 bales of Cotton at one quarter of a cent per lb. decline, and the market closing heavy.—*Char. Mercury*.

#### WASH HOUSES.

An application is about to be made to the Legislature of New-York for an act of incorporation with a view to the establishment of a public wash house in the city of New-York. The cost, including land, building, &c., is estimated at \$50,000. An institution of this kind, so important to the health and comfort of the poor, who cannot afford to pay the price demanded at present at private bathing establishments, is much wanted. In London, similar establishments, where the *ladies* as well as the *persons* of the poor may be washed, have been found very useful.—and New-York, with its plentiful supply of Croton water, is admirably adapted for the purpose.

#### AWFUL EVENT.

The members of the House of Delegates of Virginia were on the 7th instant, overwhelmed with grief, by the sudden death of one of their body, Col. John W. Thompson, of Betourn, who sunk back in his seat while delivering a speech, with his head on his desk, and called for water, which, when brought, he could not swallow, and in a few moments expired.

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### INTERNAL IMPROVEMENT MEETINGS.

We learn from a gentleman just from Pittsboro, that a large and enthusiastic meeting of the friends of Internal Improvement, of all parties, was held there on Tuesday last, at which Dr. McClanahan presided, to take action upon the improvement of Cape Fear and Deep Rivers, as authorized by the Act of last Session. The object of the meeting was explained by the Chairman, in an able and satisfactory manner; after which the discourse was addressed by Messrs. Giles Mebane and Hugh Waddell, of Orange, of whose speeches our informant speaks in the highest terms. At the conclusion of Mr. Waddell's speech, on motion of Mr. Haughton, Subscription Books were opened, and upwards of \$50,000 subscribed immediately. The best spirit pervaded, and an interest was manifested, which we can venture to say, renders the completion of this work *cock sure*. Indeed, our friend learned, (and which we have also heard before,) that Mr. Thompson, the Engineer, has offered to take the entire work, in conjunction with Major Gwynn, and finish it for \$185,000; giving bonds for the faithful execution of the contract. The Proceedings of this Meeting will no doubt be published at the proper time but we seize the occasion to hold up the example of the people of Chatham to the imitation of all, in other sections, interested, as they are, in the great works for the improvement of our condition. Put your own shoulders to the wheel—that's the way!—shove with all your might and main!—and then call upon *Hercules* as lustily as you please—and he will be sure to come! Our readers will also find some account of the Meeting in Salisbury on our first page. Some of the worthiest and ablest men were there—among them several members of our late legislature, who assisted in adopting our new system of State policy. We hope their constituents may support and defend them, for they richly deserve it. We shall gladly publish these Proceedings in full, when we receive them. *Ral. Times*.

### COMMUNICATION.

#### THE RECENT LEGISLATURE.

The author of "Protest" is unwilling to believe the "Watchman" in its comments upon his communication, intended to do him the injustice of impugning the honesty of his motives when questioning the wisdom and justice of the acts of the recent Legislature. Yet, it is apparent from the construction put upon them, that his position is not understood, and therefore requiring some explanation. In the first place, he thinks there is a marked difference between a protest against the public acts of the Legislature, and a nullification of them.—The first is intended as an expose of the reasons which govern the minority in not assenting to the acts of the majority, and that the responsibility of them may rest in the proper place. And also, that it may not be inferred that there was a tacit acquiescence in them when quoted, as precedents. It is a constitutional right, and is often exercised in the State and National Legislatures; and has never been productive of mischief, but of good. But the same cannot be said of the second. A spirit of nullification, which abides no decision, and sooner than peaceably acquiesce in the will of the majority, would resolve society again into its original elements. How, then, can the "Watchman" bearing in mind this distinction, properly censure the honest difference of opinion which "Protest" has expressed in his columns. In what other way can the chief end of the public Press be accomplished, but by an exchange of sentiments, and a full investigation of the merits of all measures affecting the rights and interests of society; for if wise and expedient, it will participate in the honor and share in the benefits, and if not, it is equally entitled to be discarded. And more especially would he have observed silence if he had believed his communication would have been construed as intending to undervalue the value, or retard the success of schemes so noble and so vitally important to the State, as the "Watchman" forcibly represents them. He, therefore, takes this occasion to disclaim any such intention, and, in short, to say that having entirely repudiated the spirit and independence of a freeman, when experiencing disappointment in a favorite measure, he shall in future lend his feeble influence in advancing the claims and securing the great benefits which may arise to Western and the whole of North Carolina, by the proposed extensive scheme of Internal Improvements. It may be consistent, but is never wise, when a favorite measure is no more in existence, to undervalue the value of the substitute and retard its success when it may secure greater benefits. He hopes he has too much State pride and patriotism, to oppose any improvement in the State, which is calculated to be beneficial to the State, and which will develop any great interests calculated to add wealth, prosperity and happiness to large classes of his fellow-citizens of the State.

#### "IF IT CAN BE BUILT."

If the saying of the poet be true, that "our doubt are traitors," then does the above expression embody treason to the Railroad, we had almost said to the State. "If it can be built!" That's not the sort talk to effect any purpose, except the defeat of the most practicable scheme ever set on foot to redeem the fortunes of our good old State. Suppose every man of us fold our arms, look knowing, shake our heads, and say, "It is a great work—if it can only be built!" Is the "great work" likely to be accomplished under such encouragement? No. And the man who achieves a reputation for sagacity by such remarks, only deserves from his country such reward as is due to those who defeat great and patriotic projects for the good of mankind. But let every man say, "It can be built—it must be built," and what is the consequence? The early construction of the Road. That's the way to talk for effect. Let every citizen be fully persuaded in his own mind—no matter whether he has money, labor, or only the influence of thought and talk to invest in the work; and let him speak of it with a view to the benefit which he may honestly believe it will confer, and of the undoubted practicability of the work—and it will soon be done.—*Greens. Pat.*

#### A telegraphic dispatch received at Baltimore,

dated New-Orleans afternoon of 7th inst., states that there has been a great rise in the waters of the Mississippi within a few days. It was at that time nearly level with the banks in some places, and in others overflowing them. The rise is stated to be greater than ever before known. Measures are being taken to prevent the injury that may result from the overflow. Business was active and prosperous, only retarded by the apprehensions of a freshet and overflowing of the wharves and lower parts of the city. The views of the steamer *Canada* had been received and pretty well digested, since which there have been sales of 5,000 bales of Cotton at one quarter of a cent per lb. decline, and the market closing heavy.—*Char. Mercury*.

#### WASH HOUSES.

An application is about to be made to the Legislature of New-York for an act of incorporation with a view to the establishment of a public wash house in the city of New-York. The cost, including land, building, &c., is estimated at \$50,000. An institution of this kind, so important to the health and comfort of the poor, who cannot afford to pay the price demanded at present at private bathing establishments, is much wanted. In London, similar establishments, where the *ladies* as well as the *persons* of the poor may be washed, have been found very useful.—and New-York, with its plentiful supply of Croton water, is admirably adapted for the purpose.

#### AWFUL EVENT.

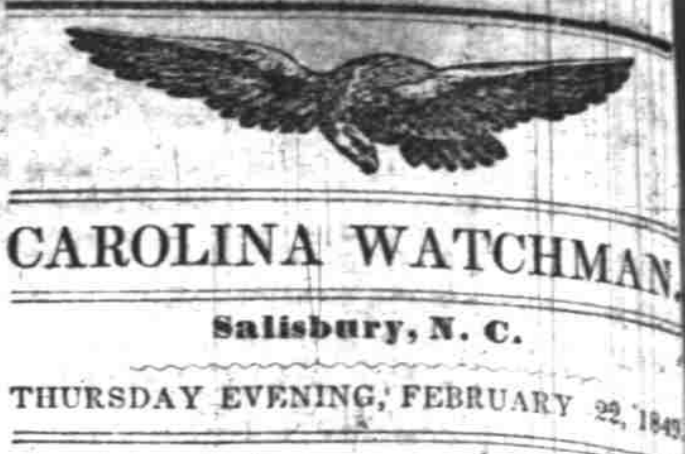
The members of the House of Delegates of Virginia were on the 7th instant, overwhelmed with grief, by the sudden death of one of their body, Col. John W. Thompson, of Betourn, who sunk back in his seat while delivering a speech, with his head on his desk, and called for water, which, when brought, he could not swallow, and in a few moments expired.

#### PRIZE FIGHT.

A prize fight took place in Kent county, Maryland, a few days ago, between Yankee Sullivan and John Hyer. After the 16th round, Hyer was pronounced the victor, he having sustained but little injury, while his antagonist was beaten into a jelly. About a hundred thousand dollars were bet on the issue! We are astonished to learn that such an inhuman species of barbarity is tolerated in Maryland. All the parties ought to be committed to the penitentiary, and an end forever put to such sport. Maryland ought to be ashamed of herself.

#### SEVERAL PEACH BLOSSOMS.

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THURSDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 22, 1849.

### PLANK ROADS.

We call attention to the excellent report of Col. Philo White, (the publication of which we commence in this paper,) on the subject of Plank Roads. Many persons ardently desirous of promoting the prosperity of North Carolina, and bearing a proposition to construct such a work, would at once pronounce against it as being impracticable and wasteful.