

THE WEEKLY NEWS.

VOLUME 3.

CHARLOTTE, N. C. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1869.

NO 83.

WEEKLY NEWS.

CHARLOTTE:

Tuesday, December 14, 1869

R. H. ALDRICH & CO., PROPRIETORS.

R. P. WARING, Editor.

Office on Trade-Street, Springs Building

RATES OF SUBSCRIPTION: One Year \$2.50, Six Months \$1.50, Three Months \$1.00.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

WASHINGTON, December 6.—The following is the President's message, read to-day in Congress:

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

In coming before you for the first time as the Chief Magistrate of a great nation it is with gratitude to the Giver of all good for the many benefits that we enjoy. We are blessed with peace, without entangling alliances abroad to forebode trouble, with territory unsurpassed in fertility, of an area equal to an abundant support of 500,000,000 of people, abounding in every variety of useful mineral in quantities sufficient to supply the world for generations. Exuberant crops in variety, climate adapted to the production of every species of the earth's riches, suited to the habits, tastes, and requirements of every living thing, with a population of 40,000,000 of free people, speaking one language, with facilities for every mortal to acquire education; institutions closing to none the avenues to fame, or any blessing of fortune that may be coveted; with freedom of print, press, and school. A revenue flowing into the National Treasury beyond the requirements of the Government. Happily, harmony is being restored within our own borders. Manufactures hitherto unknown in this country are springing up in all sections, producing a degree of national independence unequalled by any other power. These blessings and countless others are entrusted to your care and mine for safe keeping for the brief period of our tenure of office. In a short time we must each of us return to the ranks of the people who have conferred our honors, and account to them for our stewardship. I earnestly desire that neither you nor I may be condemned by a free and enlightened constituency, nor by our own consciences.

Emerging from a rebellion of gigantic magnitude, aided as it was by the sympathies and assistance of nations with which we were at peace, eleven States of the Union were four years ago left without legal State governments. A national debt had been contracted; commerce was almost driven from the seas; the industry of one-half of the country had been taken from the capitalists and placed where all labor rightfully belongs—in the keeping of the laborer. The work of restoring State governments loyal to the Union, protecting and fostering free labor, providing the means for paying the interest on the public debt, have received ample attention from Congress. Although your efforts have not met with success in all the particulars that might have been desired, yet in the whole they have been more successful than could reasonably have been anticipated.

GEORGIA TO BE RECONSTRUCTED. Seven of the States which passed ordinances of secession have been fully restored to their places in the Union. The eighth—Georgia—held an election at which she ratified her Constitution, republican in form, elected a Governor, members of Congress, State Legislature, and the other officers required. The Governor was installed; the Legislature met and performed all the acts then required of them by the reconstruction acts of Congress. Subsequently, however, in violation of the Constitution which they had just ratified, as since decided by the Supreme Court of that State, they unseated the colored members of the Legislature and admitted to their seats some members who are disqualified by the third clause of the fourteenth amendment, an article which they themselves had contributed to ratify. Under these circumstances, I would submit to you whether it would not be wise without delay to enact a law authorizing the Governor of Georgia to convene the members originally elected to the Legislature, requiring each to take the oath prescribed by the reconstruction acts, and none to be admitted who are ineligible under the third clause of the fourteenth amendment.

THE FREEDMEN. The freedmen, under the protection which they have received, are making rapid progress in learning, and no complaints are heard of lack of industry on their part when they receive fair remuneration for their labor.

THE GOVERNMENT INCOME. The means provided for paying the interest on the public debt, with all other expenses of Government, are more than ample.

THE LOSS OF OUR COMMERCE. The loss of our commerce is the

only result of the late rebellion which has not received sufficient attention from you. To this subject I call your earnest attention. I will not now suggest plans by which this object may be effected, but will, if necessary, make it the subject of a special message during the session.

THE ELECTIONS UNDER RECONSTRUCTION IN THE SOUTH. Congress, by joint resolution, authorized the Executive to order elections in the States of Virginia, Mississippi, and Texas, to submit to them the Constitutions which each had previously framed and to submit the Constitutions either entire or in separate parts to be voted upon at the discretion of the Executive. Under this authority elections were called in Virginia the election took place on the 6th of July. The Governor and Lieutenant-Governor elected have been installed. The Legislature met and did all required by this resolution and by all the reconstruction acts of Congress, and abstained from all doubtful authority. I recommend that her senators and representatives be promptly admitted to their seats, and that the State be fully restored to its place in the family of States.

Elections were called in Mississippi and Texas to commence November 30th—two days in Mississippi and four in Texas. The elections have taken place, but the result is not known. It is hoped that the acts of the Legislatures of these States, when they meet, will be such as to receive your approval, and thus close the work of reconstruction.

THE RESUMPTION OF SPECIE PAYMENT. Among the evils growing out of the rebellion, and not yet referred to, is that of an irredeemable currency. It is an evil which I hope will receive your most earnest attention. It is a duty, and one of the highest duties of Government, to secure to the citizen a medium of fixed and unvarying value. This implies a return to a specie basis, and no substitute for it can be devised. It should be commenced now, and reached at the earliest practicable moment consistent with a fair regard to the interest of the debtor class. Immediate resumption, if practicable, would not be desirable. It would compel the debtor class to pay beyond their contracts the premium on gold at the date of their purchase, and would bring bankruptcy and ruin to thousands.

Fluctuations, however, in the value of the measure of all values—gold, is detrimental to the interests of trade. It makes the man of business an involuntary gambler, for in all cases where future payment is to be made, both the parties speculate as to what will be the value of the currency paid and received. I earnestly recommend to you, then, such legislation as will insure a gradual return to specie payments, and put an immediate stop to the fluctuations in the value of currency. The methods to secure the former of these results are as numerous as speculators on political economy. To secure the latter, I see but one way; and that is to authorize the Treasury to redeem its own paper at a fixed value whenever presented, and withhold from circulation all currency so redeemed until sold again for gold. The vast resources of the nation, both developed and undeveloped, ought to make our credit the best on earth. With less burden of taxation than the citizen has endured for the six years past, the entire debt could be paid in ten years, but it is not desirable that the people should be taxed to pay it in that time. Year by year the ability to pay increases in rapid ratio, but the burden of interest ought to be reduced as rapidly as can be without a violation of contract. The public debt is represented in great part by bonds having from one to forty-five years to run, bearing interest at the rate of five and six per cent. respectively. It is optional with the Government to pay these bonds at any period of the least time mentioned upon their face. The time has already expired when a great part may be taken in, and rapidly approaching when it may well be believed that all which are now due may be replaced by bonds bearing a rate of interest not exceeding four and a half per cent., and as rapidly as the remainder become due they may be replaced in the same way. To accomplish this it may be necessary to authorize the interest to be paid at either of the three or four money-centres to Europe, or by any of the assistant treasurers of the United States, at the option of the holder of the bond. I suggest this subject for the consideration of Congress, and also simultaneously with this the propriety of redeeming our currency, as before suggested, at its market value at the time the law goes into effect, increasing the rate at which currency will be bought and sold, from day to day or week to week, at the same rate of interest as the Government pays upon its bonds.

The subject of tariff and internal taxation will necessarily receive your attention. The revenues of the country are greater than the requirements, and may, with safety, be reduced—both as the funding of the debt in a four or four and a half per cent loan would reduce the annual current expenses largely, thus, after funding justifying a greater reduction of taxation than would now be expedient. I suggest a postponement of this ques-

tion until the next meeting of Congress.

TARIFF. It may be advisable to modify taxation and tariff in instances where unjust and burdensome discriminations are made by the present laws; but of a general revision of the laws regulating this subject I recommend a postponement for the present.

THE INCOME TAX. I also suggest a renewal of the tax on incomes, but at a reduced rate, and this tax to expire in three years.

CUSTOMS. With the funding of the national debt, as here suggested, I feel safe in saying that the taxes and revenue from imports may be reduced from sixty to eighty millions per annum, at once, and may be still further reduced from year to year as the resources of the country are developed.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY. The report of the Secretary of the Treasury shows the receipts of the Government for the fiscal year ending June 30th, \$37,948,747, and expenditures, including bounties, &c., \$32,430,597. The estimates for the ensuing year are more favorable to the Government, and will no doubt show a much larger decrease of the public debt. The receipts in the Treasury beyond the expenditure have exceeded the amount necessary to be placed to the credit of the sinking fund, as provided by law. To lock up the surplus in the Treasury and withhold from circulation would lead to such a contraction of currency as to cripple trade and seriously affect the respectability of the country. Under these circumstances the Secretary of the Treasury and myself concurred in the propriety of using all the surplus currency in the Treasury in the purchase of Government bonds, thus reducing the interest-bearing indebtedness of the country, and of submitting to Congress the question of the disposition to be made of the bonds so purchased. The bonds now held by the Treasurer amount to \$75,000,000, including those of the sinking fund. I recommend that the whole be placed to the credit of the sinking fund.

Your attention is respectfully invited to the recommendations of the Secretary of the Treasury for the creation of the office of Commissioner of Customs and Revenue, for the increase of the salary of certain classes of officials, and the substitution of increased national bank circulation in place of circulating three per cent gold.

RECOMMENDATION FOR THE REPEAL OF LAWS ALLOWING SHARES OF FINES, PENALTIES, FORFEITURES, ETC., TO THE OFFICERS OF THE GOVERNMENT OR TO INFORMERS. The office of Commissioner of Internal Revenue is one of the most arduous and responsible under the Government, and falls but little short of a Cabinet position in its responsibilities and importance. I would ask for it, therefore, such legislation as in your judgment, will place the office upon a footing of dignity commensurate with its importance and with the character and qualifications of the class of men required to fill it properly.

CUBA. As the United States is the friend of all nations, so do its people sympathize with all people struggling for liberty and self-government. But while so sympathizing it is due to our honor that we should abstain from enforcing our views upon unwilling nations, and from taking an interested part in quarrels between different nations, or between Governments and their subjects. Our course should always be in conformity with strict justice and law—international and local. Such has been the policy of this Administration in dealing with these questions for than a year. A valuable province of Spain, and a near neighbor of ours, in whom all our people cannot but feel a deep interest, has been struggling for independence and freedom. The people and Government of the United States entertain the same warm feelings and sympathies for the people of Cuba in their pending struggle that they manifested throughout the previous struggle between Spain and her former colonies in behalf of the latter. The contest has at no time assumed conditions which amount to war, in the sense of international law, or which would show the existence of a *de facto* political organization of the insurgents sufficient to justify a recognition of belligerency. The principle is maintained, that this nation is its own judge of when to accord the rights of belligerency either to a people struggling to free themselves from a Government they believe to be oppressive, or to independent nations at war with each other. The United States has no disposition to interfere with the existing relations of Spain to her colonial possessions on this continent. They believe in due time Spain and other European Powers will find their interest in terminating those relations and establishing their present dependencies as independent Powers. These dependencies are no longer regarded as subjects of transfer from one European Power to another. When the present relation of colonies ceases, they are to become independent Powers, exercising the right of choice and of self-control in the determination of their future condition and relation with other Powers.

The United States, in order to put a stop to the bloodshed in Cuba, and

in the interest of the neighboring people, proposed its good offices to bring the existing contest to a termination. The offer, not being accepted by Spain on the basis which we believed could be received by Cuba, was withdrawn. It is hoped that the good offices of the United States may prove advantageous for the settlement of this unhappy strife. In the mean while, a number of illegal expeditions against Cuba have been broken up. It has been the endeavor of the Administration to execute the neutrality laws, no matter how unpleasant the task, made so by the suffering we endured from the lack of like good faith towards us by other nations.

SPANISH SEIZURE OF AN AMERICAN VESSEL. On the 26th of March last, the United States schooner, *Lizzie Major*, was arrested on the high seas by a Spanish frigate, and two passengers taken and carried prisoners to Cuba. Representations of this fact were made to the Spanish Government as soon as official information reached Washington. The two passengers were set at liberty, and the Spanish Government assured the United States that the captain of the frigate making the capture had acted without law, that he had been reprimanded, and that the Spanish authorities in Cuba would not sanction any act that could violate the rights or great with disrespect the sovereignty of this nation.

The question of the seizure of the brig *Mary Lowell*, at Bahama by the Spanish authorities is now the subject of correspondence between this Government and Spain and Great Britain.

The Captain General of Cuba about May last issued a proclamation authorizing the searching of vessels on the high seas. Immediate remonstrance was made against this, whereupon the Captain General issued a proclamation limiting the search to vessels of the United States authorized under the treaty of 1795. This proclamation, however, was immediately withdrawn. I have always felt that the most intimate relations should be cultivated between the U. S. and independent nations on this continent. It may be well worth considering whether new treaties between us and them may not be profitably entered into to secure more intimate relations—friendly, commercial and otherwise.

CENTRAL AMERICA—THE DARREN CANAL. The inter-oceanic canal, to connect the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans through the Isthmus of Darien, is one in which commerce is greatly in-

terested. The question of renewing the treaty for reciprocal trade between the United States and the British provinces on this continent is not favorably considered. In conformity with proposition to admit mixed courts for the suppression of the slave trade is under negotiation.

THE FRENCH CABLE. It having come to my knowledge that a corporate company, organized under British laws, proposed to land upon the shores of the United States, and to operate there a submarine cable, under a concession of the Emperor of the French, for an exclusive right for twenty years, for telegraphic communication between the shores of France and the United States, with the very objectionable feature of subjecting all messages conveyed thereby to the scrutiny and control of the French Government, I caused the French and British legations at Washington to be made acquainted with the probable policy of Congress on this subject as foreshadowed by a bill which passed the Senate in March last.

This drew from the representatives of the company an agreement to accept as the basis of their operations the provisions of the bill or such other enactments on the subject as might be passed during the approaching session of Congress, also to use their influence to secure from the French Government a modification of their concession to permit the landing of any cable delonging to any company incorporated by authority of the United States or any State in the Union, and on their part not to oppose the establishment of any such cable. In consideration of this agreement I directed the withdrawal of all opposition by the United States to the landing of the cable until the meeting of Congress. I regret to say there has been no modification made in the company's concession, nor, so far as I can learn, have they attempted to secure one.

Their concession excludes capital and citizens of the United States from competition upon the shores of France. I recommend legislation to protect the rights of citizens of the United States and the sovereignty of the nation against such an assumption; and I shall also endeavor to secure by negotiation the abandonment of the principle of monopolies in ocean cables.

NATURALIZED CITIZENS. The unsettled political condition of other countries less fortunate than our own sometimes induces their citizens to come to the United States for the sole purpose of becoming naturalized. Having secured this, and resided there without disclosing their change of allegiance, they accept official positions of trust or honor which can only be held by citizens of their native lands. They journey under passports describing them as such citizens; and it is only when civil discord (after perhaps years of quiet) threatens their persons or their property, or when their native State drafts them into military service, that their change of allegiance is known.

THE ALABAMA CLAIMS. Towards the close of the last administration a convention was signed at London for the settlement of outstanding claims between Great Britain and the United States, which failed to receive the consent of the Senate. The time and the circumstances attending the negotiation of that treaty were unfavorable to its acceptance by the people of the United States, and its provisions were wholly inadequate to the settlement of the grave wrongs sustained by this Government.

The injuries resulting to the United States by reason of the course adopted by Great Britain during the war in the increase of the rates of insurance, in the diminution of exports to domestic industry and production, in its effect upon the foreign commerce of the country, in the decrease and transfer to Great Britain of our commercial marine, in the prolongation of the war, and in the increased cost both in treasure and in lives of its suppression, could not be adjusted

and satisfied as ordinary commercial claims which continually arise between commercial nations; and yet the convention treated them simply as such ordinary claims, from which they differ more widely in the gravity of their character than in the magnitude of their amount. Great even as is that difference, not a word was found in the treaty, and not an inference could be drawn from it, to remove the sense of the unfriendliness of the course of Great Britain in our struggle for existence which had so deeply and universally impressed itself upon the people of this country. Believing that a convention thus conceived in its scope and inadequate in its provisions would not have produced the hearty, cordial settlement of the pending questions which alone is consistent with the relations which I desire to have firmly established between the United States and Great Britain, I regarded the action of the Senate in the rejection of the treaty, to have been wisely taken in the interest of peace and as a necessary step in the direction of a perfect and cordial friendship between the two countries.

A sensitive people, conscious of their power, are more wholly at ease under a great wrong wholly unatoned, than under the restraint of a settlement which satisfies neither their ideas of justice nor their grave sense of the grievance they have sustained. The rejection of the treaty was followed by a state of public feeling on both sides which I thought not favorable to renewed negotiations. I accordingly instructed the Minister of the United States to Great Britain, and found that my views in this regard were shared by her Majesty's Ministers. I hope that the time may soon arrive when the two Governments can approach the solution of this momentous question with an appreciation of what is due to the rights, dignity, and honor of each, and with the determination not only to remove the causes of complaint in the past, but to lay the foundation of a broad principle of public law which will prevent future differences, and tend to firm and continued friendship. This is now the only grave question which the United States has with any foreign nation.

THE CHINESE QUESTION. Through the agency of a more enlightened policy than that heretofore pursued towards China, largely due to the anxiety and efforts of our own distinguished citizens, the world is about to commence largely increased relations with that populous and hitherto exclusive nation. As the United States have been the initiators in this new policy, so they should be the most earnest in showing their good faith in making it a success. In this connection I advise such legislation as to forever preclude the employment of Chinese on our soil under the name of coolies, and also to prevent American vessels from engaging in the transportation of coolies to any country tolerating the system.

I also recommend that the mission to China be raised to one of the first-class.

THE ARMY—FORTIFICATIONS, ETC. The recommendation of the General of the Army that appropriations be made for the forts at Boston, Portland, &c., is under consideration.

I call special attention to the recommendations of the Chief of Ordnance for the sale of arsenals and lands no longer of use to the Government.

THE NAVY. The report of the Secretary of the Navy accompanying this shows the condition of the navy. When this Administration came into office and by changes made since, strenuous efforts have been made to place as many vessels in commission, or to render them fit for service when required, as possible, and to substitute the sail for steam while cruising, thus materially reducing the expense of the navy and adding greatly to its efficiency. Looking to our future, I recommend a liberal though not extravagant policy towards this branch of the public service.

POST-OFFICE DEPARTMENT. The report of the Postmaster-General furnishes a clear and comprehensive exhibit of the operations of the postal service and of the financial condition of the Post-office Department. The ordinary postal revenues for year ending June 30, 1869, amounted to \$16,444,610, and the expenditure to \$23,698,131. Your attention is respectfully called to the recommendation made by the Postmaster-General for authority to change the rate of compensation to the main trunk-railway lines for their services in carrying the mails, for having post-route maps executed, for reorganizing and increasing the efficiency of the special agency service, for the increase of the mail service of the Pacific, and for establishing mail service under the flag of the Union in the Atlantic, and most especially to call your attention to his recommendation for the total abolition of the franking privilege. This is an abuse from which no one receives a commensurate advantage. It reduces the receipts for postal service from twenty-five to thirty per cent., and largely increases the service to be performed.

CONCLUSIONS. There are many subjects not alluded to in this message which might with propriety be introduced, but I abstain, believing that your patriotism and statesmanship will suggest the topics and the legislation most conducive to the interests of the whole people. On my part I promise a rigid adherence to the laws and their strict enforcement.

U. S. GRANT. WASHINGTON, Dec. 6, 1869.

Col. Spier Whitaker, formerly of Halifax, died at his residence in Davenport, Iowa, last Thursday. Col. W. was well and favorably known, especially in Eastern North Carolina; he was, at one time Attorney-General of that State, which position he filled with credit. In the County of Halifax, his former residence, he has left a large family connection.—Standard.

Ex-President Andrew Johnson has declined the nomination for representative in the Constitutional Convention from Greene county.

Eugene has safely made the passage of the straits or canal of Suez. If her husband can get through his straits as well there will be joy unspeakable at the Tuileries.

A Cuban expedition of five hundred picked men is now organizing to sail shortly from some Southern port.

Our best clergymen "preach" the least, in other words, their words go to, and not round a subject, never touching it.

ECOLOGICAL.—A New York letter in the Philadelphia *Day* says, "Attempts to bribe the *Day* dailies with small sums are always failures."

When a baby is born in the Onondaga Community, the news is sent by telegraph to the Wallingford Community, and congratulations are exchanged by the two communities.

There is now no doubt that Judge Hoar will shortly retire from the Cabinet and Judge Edwards Pierpont, of New York, will succeed him as Attorney-General of the United States. Judge Hoar will be transferred to the bench of the United States Supreme Court.

TEXAS LEGISLATURE.—On Friday the Senate adopted unanimously the House resolution requesting Congress to remove all the disabilities imposed by the fourteenth amendment, and passed on the third reading a bill to reduce the State tax of four mills on the dollar to two mills by a vote of 14 to 8.

The splendid net-work of railroads surrounding Brussels gave proof of its carrying capacity the other day, when a general review of the Belgian troops was to be held near the capital. In four days the different roads carried 209,370 passengers to Brussels. This is of great importance to Europe, as Belgium would probably become the theatre of war in case a general conflict should break out.

THE APOCYPHY.—The only book in the Hebrew tongue that touches the immortality of the human soul is the Wisdom of Solomon, which contains the passage that "to the unwise it appears that the person who dies is dead, but to the wise it is known that his spirit has gone beyond the grave."—Judge Hooley, of Cincinnati.

A special meeting of the trustees of Columbian College was held on Tuesday afternoon, at which Mr. W. W. Corcoran was elected a member of the board. Mr. Corcoran was subsequently elected president of the board to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of the late Hon. James Kentland.

A wood-sawyer who was piling wood near the railroad track at Edgerton, Ohio, one day last week, noticed, while standing on the pile as the lightning train approached, a large stick lying upon the rail. Without a moment's hesitation he leaped directly before the train and grasped the stick. At that instant the engine struck him and hurled him some distance forward. He fell to the ground mangled and lifeless, but he had saved the train.

A colored member of the South Carolina Legislature, named Whipper, stands a good chance of being elected Judge of the State Supreme Court. He is said to be an intelligent man and very popular in his party. If elected he will doubtless prove a powerful engine for the good of his party, as he will be used as a "Whipper-in" of all who might desire to flee the wrath to come.

Early frost has greatly affected fall plowing in Minnesota. Most of the work usually done at this season must be crowded into the spring.

COTTON RECEIPTS AT CHARLESTON.—We note with much satisfaction the large increase of cotton receipts at this port, for the first quarter of the current business year, footing up 102,759 bales, against 65,558 for the corresponding period of last year, and more than half of all last year's receipts together, which are stated at 199,101 bales. In the total figures Charleston stands third on the list of cotton ports, New Orleans and Savannah being in the lead. These figures should reassure the doubtful, if any there be, as to the future commercial prospects of Charleston, and warrant an estimate of 275,000 bales for the present year.—Courier.

A White Pine landlord thus advertises his hotel in the local papers: "And Joseph went abroad, and he said unto his brethren, 'I am Joseph, both my father yet live.' And his brethren answered him, 'You be; the old man is doing badly, for he boards at the Cosmopolitan.'"

Not a little excitement has been caused in Cincinnati by a wedding which has taken place clandestinely, after the lady had been locked up by her father several times to keep her from meeting the gentleman, and after three partial but unsuccessful elopements.

Prince Alfred has been guilty of a breach of courtesy which does not speak well for his breeding. When sailing into the port of Yokohama the English admiral was duly saluted, but the American and French officers were passed by without salutation. In consequence of the insult these officers refused to attend the Prince's levee on the following day. Their absence caused so much comment that the young scuit was forced to recall his manners, and on the next morning went about the business of a general salutation like one who had no petty malice to nurse and no boyish whims to indulge.