

Upon the Message, as a whole, whilst it loses nothing in our opinion by its embracing political principles which we have for very many years sustained with our feeble powers, we are the more pleased with it that it is something better than the embodiment of a particular party creed. Its frankness, its justice, its moderation, and, above all, its National tone and spirit, are such as to commend it to men of all parties, who love their country, its fame, its peace, and its prosperity. As a platform of principles, fit to be put in practice, though it may not be capacious enough to take in Disunionists and wilful agitators, there is no other class of politicians in our country that might not willingly, and even proudly, take their stand upon it.

National Intelligencer.

AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, Dec. 5th.

Mr. J. R. McLean, Chairman of the Committee on Amendments to the Constitution, reported (as announced in yesterday's legislative summary,) adversely on the resolutions instructing them to enquire into the expediency of so amending the Constitution as to give the election of Judges to the people, &c., &c., and asked to be discharged from the further consideration thereof.

Upon the question—"shall the House concur in said Report?"—Mr. Foster, of Davidson, said, though unacquainted with Legislative proceedings, it seemed to him a little strange that the Chairman did not embody in one report all the subjects referred to the Committee; when the Committee had authorized a report upon the whole subject.

Mr. McLean dissented, and avowed his intention, after a vote was taken upon the report before them, to report a bill upon the other subject—Free Suffrage—alluded to.

Mr. Foster then said, that he understood the Chairman to say, that he would, after taking the vote, report a bill upon the subject. Now, he thought there was a desire to dodge the question; but he wished to give fair notice that no legislative trickery or legerdemain could shield certain gentlemen from going on the record.—*They should show their hands one way or the other!* He intended to offer, at the proper time, a minority report, and a bill, as a substitute for the one that would be reported.

Mr. McLean disclaimed any disposition to act unfairly in the premises, and in order to give the gentleman from Davidson an opportunity to submit his counter report, he asked leave to withdraw the report upon the resolutions of Gen. Saunders; which leave being granted, he then submitted the other report, accompanied by a bill, providing for the Legislative amendment of the Constitution, so as to abrogate the property qualification in voting for Senators.

Mr. Foster submitted his minority report and bill. [It is not in our power to lay these before our readers, to day, but they shall appear.]

Mr. F. said, that finding himself in a minority upon this Committee—he would not say respectable minority, for it was a minority of one; and entertaining views entirely dissimilar from those of the Committee, he felt it a duty which he owed to himself and to those whose confidence had placed him in his present position, to embody his views briefly in a minority report. He would merely remark that, having requested the assistance of his friend from Guilford, whose acquaintance with researches into the early history of North Carolina was well known, they together had searched over the unpublished works now in the Secretary of State's Office and if members desired to investigate the subject, they would find the startling historical fact, that the people—the true legitimate sovereigns of the land—had never had to this day an opportunity of framing their own Government.

Mr. Stevenson objected to an expression in the minority report, which conveyed the idea that the majority report embodied all the views of all the Committee. He was in favor of another amendment, besides the one proposed.

Mr. Foster had no desire to do any one injustice, and therefore, if the majority report did not suit his friend from Craven, he would cheerfully tender him the minority report for his signature; for there was no man with whom he would sooner go before the people of North Carolina upon this subject, than his friend from Craven.

Mr. McLean said that he was in favor of Mr. F.'s bill, and wished to set him right.

Mr. Foster again said that he wished to say, that he had asked Mr. McLean to join him in a minority report, going by submitting to the people whether or not they wished a Convention, in preference to free suffrage alone, and he had refused! For his own part, he was against free suffrage, if that was all he was to have, and the people would yet show that they will not put up with it alone, when other important rights are withheld from them.

MR. RAYNER'S BILL CONCERNING A CONVENTION.

WHEREAS, it is strenuously insisted on by many of the citizens of this State, that the provision in the Constitution, requiring a freehold qualification to entitle persons to vote for members of the Senate in the General Assembly, operates as a heavy grievance upon a large portion if not a majority of the freemen of the State; and whereas, it is contended, by many, that a majority of the freemen of the State demand a change in the Constitution, so as to extend the right of voting for members of the Senate to all who are entitled to vote for members of the House of Commons; and whereas, the General Assembly believe, that if this be a grievance to be remedied, measures should first be adopted providing for ascertaining the will of their constituents preparatory to a change of the Constitution:

The 1st section then goes on to provide, That the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, of each and every county in the State, at the first term that shall be held after the first day of January, eighteen hundred and fifty one, shall appoint two inspectors to superintend the polls to be opened at each and every election precinct in said counties, for ascertaining by ballot, the will of the freemen of North Carolina, relative to the meeting of a State Convention.

The 2nd section provides, That it shall be the duty of the sheriffs of the respective counties in this State to open polls at the usual election precincts in said counties, on the first Thursday in May 1851, when and where all persons qualified by the Constitution to vote for members of the House of Commons, may vote for or against a State Convention—those who may wish a Convention voting, with a printed or written ticket, "Convention," and those who do not want a Convention, voting in the same way, "No Convention," or "Against Convention."

The 4th provides, That it shall be the duty of the Governor, as soon as he shall have received the returns of the sheriffs, to compare, in the presence of the Secretary of State, Public Treasurer and Comptroller, the number of votes for and against a Convention; and if it shall appear that a majority of the votes polled in the State are in favor of a Convention, he shall forthwith publish a proclamation of the fact in such newspapers as he may think proper; and he shall issue a writ of election to the sheriff of each and every county in the State, requiring him to open polls for the election of delegates to the Convention, at the same places, and under the same rules, as prescribed for holding other State elections, said polls to be opened and elections held on the first Thursday in August next.

The 7th provides, That all persons, qualified to vote for members of the House of Commons, under the present Constitution, shall be entitled to a vote for members to said Convention; and all free white men, of the age of twenty one years, who shall have been resident in the State one year previous to, and shall continue to be so resident at the time of the election, shall be eligible to a seat in said Convention.

The 8th provides, That each county in the State shall be entitled to elect the same number of delegates to said Convention that said county is entitled to members in the House of Commons, and no more: Provided, that those counties, which, in consequence of division since the last apportionment, now vote together for any given number of members in the House of Commons, shall vote in the same way for delegates to said Convention.

The 9th provides, That the delegates elected shall convene in or near the city of Raleigh on the third Monday in September next; and provided that a quorum does not attend, on that day, the delegates may adjourn, from day to day, until a quorum be present; and a majority of delegates elected shall constitute a quorum to do business.

The 13th provides, That the following proposition shall be submitted to the people for their assent or dissent to the same; the former of which shall be understood as expressed by the votes for "Convention," and the latter by the votes "no Convention," or "against Convention," at the time and in the mode herein before provided, viz: that the said Convention, when a quorum of the delegates who shall be elected, are assembled, shall frame and devise an amendment to the Constitution of this State, so as to provide, that all persons entitled to vote for members of the House of Commons, shall also be entitled to vote for members of the Senate in the General Assembly; and that said Convention shall not make any other alteration or amendment of the Constitution whatever.

The 14th provides, That if a majority of the votes at the election first directed to be held by this Act, shall be found 'for Convention,' it shall be considered and understood that the people by their vote as aforesaid, have conferred on the delegates to said Convention, the power and authority to make the alteration and amendment in the existing Constitution of the State, in the particular herein enumerated, but in no other.

And the 15th provides, That the said Convention, after having adopted an amendment to the Constitution in the said particular, shall have power and authority to prescribe the mode for the final ratification of the same by the people of the State; and to prescribe all necessary ordinances and regulations for the purpose of giving full operation and effect to the Constitution as thus altered and amended.

MR. AMIS' RESOLUTIONS.

Resolved, That the Constitutional oath prescribed to members of Congress, faithfully to observe the Constitution, requires them to enact whatever laws may be necessary to secure the full, perfect, and speedy attainment of any provision of the Constitution, and that any failure to do so is a violation of the Constitution and in derogation of their solemn oath.

Resolved, That the law known as the Fugitive slave law, passed by Congress, at its last session, or some other equally efficient, is necessary to secure the full, perfect and speedy execution of one of the most important provisions of the Constitution, and that Congress, in passing said law, acted in pursuance of the plainest requirements of Constitutional duty.

Resolved, That all efforts to repeal said law, or in any way hinder or defeat or delay the delivery of persons held to service or labor in any State under the laws thereof, upon claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due, are flagrant violations of the Constitution; and that those who engage in such efforts, manifest not only a heedless indifference to constitutional duty, but a deep seated and unrelenting hostility to the constitution and the Union.

Resolved, That it is the duty of those who love the Union and desire its preservation, to co-operate against those who thus manifest a disposition to destroy it, and compel them to submit to the constitution, and the laws passed in accordance therewith, or take measures to drive them from the Union.

Resolved therefore, That in order to ascertain who they are that thus meditate the destruction of our Government, against whom every lover of his country should unite in defence of the constitution, our Northern brethren be, and they are hereby requested, fully and fairly to meet the questions herein referred to, and, by convention or legislative action, to declare unequivocally for or against the Union and the constitution in all its parts and with all its requirements.

Resolved, That any unreasonable delay on the part of any State to take its position, will be considered as a determination to treat with indignity the just complaints of a grossly wronged people; and that we shall feel warranted in shaping our course accordingly.

Resolved, That our brethren of the Southern States are earnestly requested to unite with us in the position we have taken of union and co-operation against the enemies of the Union.

Resolved, That his Excellency, the Governor, be requested to transmit forthwith to the Governors of the several States of the Union a copy of the foregoing resolutions, with a request that they submit them without delay to the Legislatures of their respective

States, if in session, or, if the Legislatures be not in session, to place them with all convenient despatch before the people.

DAILY REGISTER.



Saturday Morning, Dec. 7th.

We committed an unintentional error in our last, in our statement of the House vote for Comptroller. Messrs. Cotton, Bond and Wilson, Locos, voted for Maj. Collins, and Messrs. Blow, Davidson and D. F. Caldwell, Whigs, voted for Maj. Clarke. Mr. Erwin voted for Mr. Dargan; Mr. Swanner for Mr. Anderson, and Mr. Sherard for Mr. Nixon.

There was also a mistake in our account of proceedings of Wednesday, whereby Mr. Parham, instead of his colleague, Mr. Wiggins, was made to introduce the Bill for the incorporation of the Granville Plank Road Company.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

Upon a first and very cursory perusal of the late admirable Message of Mr. Fillmore, our feeling was, we freely confess, upon the whole, one of some little disappointment, that the nullification with which the Fugitive Slave Law is threatened in certain sections of the North, should not have been specifically commented upon. The closer, however, that we study that document, the more thoroughly and firmly are we convinced that it is, from every consideration, precisely the thing for the crisis; for, although it does not, in terms, name the Fugitive Slave Law as one to be enforced, it is so clearly embraced in the recommendation to preserve unimpaired, the whole compromise acts, and in the determination which it expresses to enforce the laws, that any more explicit reference to that act was rendered unnecessary. It would not have become the chief Executive of a community of States, of diverse interests and conflicting opinions, to have taken up the cudgels of the partisan for any State or either section. It is his duty to see to the enforcement of the laws every where, and under any circumstances; and this he has expressed his firm determination to do, in a manner that puts him before the whole country, without regard to section, as a President who intends to uphold the Constitution and all its guaranties.

We cannot but indulge the hope, that the official announcement of the views of the President will have a most wholesome influence upon the public mind. At all events, while Mr. Fillmore entertains his present sentiments, and has the power always at his disposal, to carry his determination into effect, we can perceive no good reason for despairing of the cause of Union and Peace.—Factions in Massachusetts may continue their attempts to resist the execution of the laws; but, then, the President has made the emphatic declaration, that he will do his duty, at all hazards.—South Carolina may be ready to secede—but she will hardly have the folly and temerity to take that step alone. Let all men, then, who love the Union, and respect the rights of the different States, take their stand upon the platform laid down in the Message, and we have no fears for the result.

REPORT FROM THE NAVY DEPARTMENT.

The views of the Secretary of the Navy are set forth with great clearness and exhibit much consideration of the subjects discussed.

The superfluity of officers of the higher grades in the navy, as compared with the subordinate grades, the importance of providing that from time to time as officers may decline in capacity for useful public service, either from superannuation or other cause, they may be retired from the active list on terms both just and liberal; the proper rule of promotion in the highest grades of the service, so that merit might have its claims allowed without entire exclusion by seniority; the recommendation to recognize by law the office of Commodore and to raise at least two officers to the rank of Rear Admiral—these are topics upon which the report makes many excellent suggestions and submits each point to the consideration of Congress in a manner calculated to invite the practical attention of that body.

The extension of our territory along the Pacific Coast, with the inconveniences and delay of communicating directly with it, is urged by the Secretary as giving a special reason in addition to others of great weight, why the office of Rear Admiral should be created. With an officer of that rank in command of the whole coast and with authority to convene courts martial without the need of waiting orders from Washington, the efficiency of the service in that quarter would be greatly promoted. Squadrons connected with the coast and with the protection of the Pacific trade might have their permanent stations at San Francisco, Astoria, San Diego or other suitable points, without the necessity of returning at the close of every cruise to some one of the Atlantic ports.

With regard to the application of steam to ships of war the Secretary is not of the opinion that sail vessels will be thereby superseded; but he regards war steamers as most valuable auxiliaries. It is, of course, impossible to know, yet awhile, what new improvements may be applied to steamers to render them still better adapted to purposes of war, yet enough

have been ascertained, tested and proved, to demonstrate an extraordinary degree of efficiency in these vessels and to give ground for a reasonable expectation that other and further uses will be found in which they will prove highly available.

The Naval Academy at Annapolis has been placed under a new and improved system of regulations with an enlarged corps of professors; and the attachment of a practical instruction in seamanship and gunnery, on short cruises under the direction of the superintendent, in analogy with the system of encampments by the cadets at West Point, is justly regarded as an improvement of much value.

The report on the whole is admirably systematized and its recommendations are made in an unassuming manner and with an evident sincerity which looks intently to the good of the service, the interests of the country and the honor of our flag.

We are gratified to learn from the Union that the members of both Houses of Congress have re-assembled in a better spirit than when they separated on the 30th of September last. There seems to be a fixed determination among a decided majority of both Houses to arrest further discussion and agitation of slavery. From what we can learn, if the question should be brought up in any form, motions will be made to lay the resolutions on the table; which proceeding will cut off debate, and will probably succeed in both houses.

STATE LEGISLATURE.

FRIDAY, Dec. 6th.

Mr. Drake, from the Committee on Claims, to whom was referred a resolution in favor of H. T. Dyer, Sheriff of Wilkes County, reported the same to the Senate and recommended its passage. Read second time and passed.

On motion of Mr. Rogers.
Resolved, That the Committee on the Judiciary be requested to inquire into the expediency of amending the existing law as to authorize the Courts of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, in each and every County in the State, to levy a tax, on real estate to create a fund to pay talis jurors who may hereafter be summoned to sit on jury trials.

On motion of Mr. Bynum.
Resolved, That the Committee on Propositions and Grievances, be instructed to enquire into the propriety of liberating a mulatto boy, the property of Col. John Roberts, of Cleveland. Said resolutions was accompanied by a memorial.

Mr. Nixon, a bill to enlarge the power of the Commissioners of the town of Wilmington. Read first time and referred to Committee on Internal Improvements, and ordered to be printed.

Mr. Watson, a bill to repeal the act of the General Assembly of 1849, providing for the support of a system of International Literary and Scientific exchanges. Read and referred to Committee on Library.

Mr. Washington, a bill authorizing Needham Lofton, Jr., to emancipate his slave Elias Council, upon certain conditions therein mentioned. Read and referred to Committee on Propositions and Grievances.

The Senate then proceeded to the consideration of the unfinished business of yesterday, to wit, the bill to incorporate the Ashville and Greenville plank road Company; which, after sundry amendments, was passed its second reading.

Rec'd message from the House, with Resolutions providing for certain alterations and improvements in the Hall of the House of Commons, and making an appropriation therefor. Read first time, and on motion of Mr. Bynum, referred to a select Committee, consisting of Messrs. Bynum Sheppard and Drake, with instructions to enquire into the propriety of making similar provisions for furnishing Senate Chamber.

A bill to amend an act passed at the Session 1833-'34, entitled an act to establish a bank in the State of North Carolina, was taken up and on motion of Mr. Bower ordered to be laid on the table.

Mr. Thomas from the Committee on Internal Improvements, to whom was referred the bill to incorporate the Tennessee Rail Road Company, reported the same without amendment and recommended its passage.

On motion of Mr. Cameron, the Senate adjourned until to-morrow 11 o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Mr. G. D. Poole, member elect from Pasquotank, appeared and was qualified.

The Speaker laid before the House a report from the Bank of Fayetteville, and also one from the Cape Fear, which were ordered to be sent to the Senate with a proposition to print.

Mr. Avery presented the resignation of D. Purvis, a Justice of the Peace for the county of McDowell.

Mr. Hayes, of Cherokee, presented a memorial from citizens of Cherokee county, praying the Legislature to take some action upon the removal of the Cherokee Indians from the State; which was, on motion of Mr. Avery, ordered to be referred to a Joint Select Committee of 3 from the House and 2 from the Senate.

Mr. Barnes, of Edgecombe, a resolution that the Committee on the Judiciary be instructed to inquire into the expediency of giving County Courts the discretion to pay Wardens of the poor. Referred.

On motion of Mr. Pigott, the bill to repeal a portion of the Revenue Act of 1846-'47, levying a tax of one per cent. upon the estates of persons dying without lineal heirs, was taken up, and debated by Messrs. Pigott, Hill, of Caswell, Steele