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CONGRESS.

December 9.—Mr. Hooper of Mass. moved to suspend the rules that he might offer the following resolution: Resolved, That in the opinion of this House the amount of revenue annually collected by taxation shall not exceed three hundred millions of dollars; that the committee on ways and means be instructed to report a bill so modifying the internal taxation as to reduce the revenue from internal taxes and tariff duties to \$300,000,000, and that the committee on appropriations be instructed not to exceed that amount, including interest on the public debt, in the appropriations reported to the House.

In support of the resolution Mr. Hooper said that it has always been considered that this House held the purse string of the nation, and should determine the amount of money that the people shall be called upon to furnish for the use of the government, as well as the mode in which it should be furnished. Upon this the practice is based of originating all money bills in the House of Representatives. During the recent war of the rebellion Congress was necessarily obliged to depend on the departments for information as to the amount of money that would be required by the government, but the time has now returned when it becomes the duty of this House to judge and determine the amount of money that should be required for the purpose of the government.

With the assistance of the able reports from the several departments which have been laid before the House, there can be no difficulty in possessing all the information to form just conclusions in regard to the amount that should be drawn by taxation from the people. The first effective step to keep down the expenditures of the government, and to secure an economical administration, is to limit the revenues to the sum required for that purpose, and never was this more important than at this time, when the industrial interests of the country are oppressed almost beyond precedent by the continuance of those heavy burdens of taxation which they cheerfully bore while the war rendered them necessary, but which the people now claim to be no longer necessary.

It appears by the report of the Secretary of the Treasury that the revenue for the year ending the 30th of June, 1867, was \$490,000,000, and he estimates the revenue for the year ending the 30th of June, 1868, at \$417,000,000; and for the year ending the 30th of June, 1869, \$381,000,000. The expenditures for the year 1867 were \$346,000,000, and are estimated for the year 1868 at \$338,000,000, and for the year 1869 at \$373,000,000. The Secretary of the Treasury adds, however, that he is hopeful that Congress will take means to largely reduce the expenditures in all branches of the service, so that a steady reduction of the debt may be continued without reducing the revenue below \$300,000,000. If the taxes may be reduced \$100,000,000, it seems to me that Congress should have something to do with the estimates for the future expenditures, and should, as the Secretary hopes, take measures to largely reduce the expenditures in all branches of the service.

But I think, said Mr. Hooper, that it should be done for the purpose of relieving the people from a portion of the heavy taxation which weighs down the industry of the country, and not for an immediate reduction of the public debt. The only way to secure economy in the expenditures is to diminish the supplies, and in doing that the heavy burden of taxation which is now weighing on the people will be lightened. The best way to increase the money in circulation is to diminish the amount exacted from the people by taking off \$50,000,000 from the taxes; that much is left in possession of the people which they can use for other purposes.

While Mr. Hooper was speaking the members gathered around him, evincing great interest and anxiety in the subject, and making various suggestions. Mr. Stevens of Penn., wanted to know how the committee of ways and means was to distribute the \$500,000,000, and requested Mr. Hooper to give some indication on the point.

Mr. Hooper said that this was not a matter for him, but for the committee to decide. Mr. Eldridge of Wis. suggested an amendment about limiting the internal taxation to whiskey and tobacco.

Several other suggestions were made, but as the House refused to suspend the rules in order to let Mr. Hooper's resolution be offered the whole matter fell through for the present.

Central and South America.

Our correspondents in Central and South America send us the following notes of recent events: It is looked at by persons acquainted with the politics of the country as a most extraordinary fact that war or revolution has taken place in those States for more than a year.

Cholera is said to have broken out in Honduras near the Nicaragua frontier. The prospects of the year are very favorable both in Guatemala and Salvador. In the city of Leon, Nicaragua, the inhabitants were lately startled by the sudden and almost simultaneous breaking out of a number of volcanic vents on the western or Pacific slope. The first intimation of an eruption was a low rumbling sound like distant thunder, shortly followed by quick, sharp and continuous reports, resembling the roar of a not far distant battery of heavy artillery; these reports and subsequent ones were distinctly audible on clear nights at the port of Corinto. Suddenly a slight was revealed during the night, which but few people in Central America or elsewhere ever witnessed. Two large volcanic fires with several smaller ones scattered about on the plains, shed their lights on the surrounding country and even lighted up with a warm glow the towers of the cathedral in the plaza of Leon. Thus far, says the informant, the eruptive matter consists only of large masses of molten lava, scoria and ashes—unaccompanied by any lava stream. The latest information states that a cone of about 20 feet of elevation had been formed round the principal orifice, but whether caused by upheaval or by the deposition of scoria and ashes, was not stated.

The reports respecting an attempted revolution in Costa Rica are much exaggerated; tranquillity and order reign throughout the State, and the country continues to prosper under the wise administration of its existing government.

The latest news from Lima, Peru, reaches to the 21st of November. The intelligence received from Arequipa is not of a very satisfactory character and it is apprehended that Lima will be at the mercy of bands of ruffians and banditti, who are always sure to turn up in that region whenever the country is distracted by civil war and revolution. A public meeting was convened by the Prefect of the city for the purpose of forming a volunteer corps for the defence of the capital, as there was but a small force of police left, and the arms and equipments necessary for the purpose were offered by that official. No result was arrived at, however, the citizens being opposed to doing guard duty in the city.

Meteorological Mysteries.

The Journal of Commerce says: We were much interested last week in examining a map prepared by Prof. Newton, of Yale College, during the recent meteoric display, designed to show the number which fell in consecutive hours, from the beginning to the end. It was not unlike the diagrams used in nautical circles to illustrate fluctuations in prices, the highest point reached representing the time when meteors fell too fast to be counted. Prof. Newton's explanation was lucid and starting, his observations seeming to establish the fact that the extraordinary phenomenon of Nov. 14th was a shower of comets, rather than meteors. To the same effect is an article in the Boston Transcript, which says: This beautiful phenomenon will not be witnessed again during the present century. It will occur again in 1,900. The profound mystery in which they have so long been involved begins to be removed. It is conclusively settled that they are bodies of comical origin, extraneous to the earth, and moved round the sun in orbits of elliptical form, thereby resembling the comets. Thousands of these orbits are grouped together side by side, and the meteors moving in them resemble a vast swarm of golden bees, sweeping through space in definite orbits. The group of meteor-orbits crosses the path of the earth once at a point where the earth is on the morn of Nov. 14. Our planet sweeps along past this point with a velocity of more than one thousand miles in a minute, and every meteor in its way is caught in the atmosphere and burnt up. The prodigious stream of meteors which the earth encountered one year ago had not all succeeded in crossing the path of the earth when it came round on Thursday morning last. Imagination shrank from contemplation of the numbers composing this vast swarm. Consider, for a moment, a swarm of meteors, each flying along at the rate of more than one thousand miles in a minute, one whole year in passing a given point? This vast swarm is more than thirty-three years journeying round the sun back to this point where they meet the earth. In their flight they are accompanied by a single comet. Temple's comet moves around the sun in the same direction, in the same time, and in a path which lies in the centre of this group of meteor-orbits. The same thing happens with the August meteors. Tuttle's comet flies along the pathway of these meteors—the tears of St. Lawrence. This coincidence of pathway, direction of motion, and periodic time—of comets and meteors—is a recent discovery, and one that has excited the liveliest interest among astronomers. It may be a key which shall yet unlock the mysterious character of comets, and expose these wanderers, which have hitherto defied all attempts at penetration.

It is curious that so much feeling should be manifested on the subject of reconstruction of the rebel States, when we consider the fact that the parties who exhibit this anxiety have completely exchanged position. Until March last the clamor of the Democracy was incessant for reconstruction. It had been persisted in for two years. There seemed no prospect of appeasing this demand for the return of the rebel States. All this time was carefully devoted by the Republicans to the study of the situation; the temper and purpose of the rebel leaders, the actual needs of the nation, and the condition of the loyal men in the South. Having at last mastered this lesson, the Republicans went straight at the work of restoring the States. The reconstruction measures were promptly framed and passed into laws, but no sooner had this been done than the whole element and all its allies were arrayed against the reorganization of the States. From that time to this they have neglected no one thing that would tend to the defeat of reconstruction. The Republicans, on the contrary, from the day that reconstruction upon a loyal basis was made possible, have worked assiduously to secure its accomplishment.

The lesson taught by this sudden and singular reversion of party action is simply this, that the Democracy does not desire the restoration of the country, unless rebel rule and a secedency shall at the same time be secured. And that the Republicans earnestly desire the restoration of the country holding its interests and destiny under the direction of loyal men. It is a very plain and simple issue. The country must either be handed over to traitors, or it must be held under the control of those who have saved it from destruction.

In this as in other things, men must choose the side they will support, but it will be a strange sight to see Union soldiers and earnest Republicans laboring to subject the country to the rule of traitors.—Great Republic.

A Chinese almanac is most extraordinary publication. The days for ploughing, building, travelling, and marrying are laid down in it with the greatest minuteness. The whole period of four seasons is divided into twenty-four solar terms, each possessing some characteristic name, and corresponding to the day on which the sun enters the first or fifteenth degrees of one of the twelve signs of the zodiac. As the Chinese is a lunar calendar, the places of these solstices, equinoxes, &c., which regulate the three great festivals of the year, are changed every year. There is also the intercalation of a day. The Chinese year of 354 days, which, in a period of every thirty-two or thirty-three months, amount to a great month of thirty days, which is accordingly introduced, every two or three years, in such a way as to preserve the order of these twenty-four periods.

Disaffection of Southern Emigrants. HAVANA, Dec. 7.—The Southern emigrants who recently settled in Honduras feel much dissatisfied with the course of the British government towards them. Governor Austin had granted them lands upon which to settle and given them other privileges, which the home government has disapproved. Many of the Southerners are about to return to the United States.

Reconstruction and Rebellion—Their Relative Cost.

The Montgomery convention has cost the State fifty thousand dollars, all of which must come from the people's pocket.—A Rebel Newspaper. Admit the assertion that this convention has cost \$50,000, what did secession and revolution against the government cost? It cost the lives of 30,000 poor, unoffending men who, while fighting for the mob, believed the whole thing wrong before God! It cost deep and bitter tears of sorrow from 30,000 widows and 50,000 poor orphan children. It cost the complete destruction of over ten hundred millions of dollars of property belonging to the people of Alabama! It caused the most abject poverty of 80,000 people, who were previous to secession and revolution in affluent circumstances! If the white people of Alabama the equality of the colored race, of which fact the unpentant rebels are now making such a howl about! In a word, if secession and revolution had never taken place this convention, of which these rebel scoundrels now are making such a noise about, would never have been held. The whole thing is the result of the folly of the scamps and skunks who are now making the greatest noise about expenses. They are the fellows who have brought all the evil upon the present suffering people of Alabama.—Hardy's Montgomery (Alabama) State Sentinel.

THE ANTIETAM CEMETERY.—The trustees of this national cemetery have just concluded their second annual session, which was held at Willards. One of the most important matters discussed was the propriety of designating a certain portion of the cemetery for the interment of the rebels who lost their lives in the series of engagements in that section. After some discussion it was decided to set apart a portion of the enclosure for this purpose, as a section of the Maryland lap incorporating the cemetery provided that this should be done. A majority of the Northern States having dead interred in this cemetery have made liberal appropriations for the purpose of beautifying the grounds, and it is now expected that some of the Southern States will make similar appropriations.

It has been decided at the General Land Office at Washington, in reply to a communication from a party in England wishing to have lands selected and secured for himself and others as homesteads, under the act of May 20, 1862, and the supplemental acts, in advance of the coming of the emigrants to the United States, that this cannot be done, as the law requires that the party desiring the homestead shall be a citizen of the United States, or have regularly filed his declaration of an intention to become such, before the entry can be made so as to secure the land; and, furthermore, it is required that the preliminary affidavit required of the party cannot be made out of the United States limits.

BOSTON, Mass., December 12.—The storm which began in this city at about midday yesterday and continued until an early hour this morning, prevailed at the South and West with almost unprecedented fury, a despatch from New York rating it the severest which has occurred in that vicinity during the last eight years. The travel on the railroads and horse car lines was greatly delayed, and a number of ocean steamers were prevented from sailing by the violence of the storm. A private despatch from Springfield says that the train due in this city at midnight was snowed up a short distance from New York. The storm was heard from as raging with great fury in Ohio, Maryland, Virginia and at various other points.

The geography of the last discovery needs correction. It is in the neighborhood of the South Pole, and not of the North Pole, as the papers had it a few days ago, that the new land was seen by Captain Long. This alters the force of the matter considerably. An Antarctic continent has been believed in and looked for, though no one has ever anticipated finding an Arctic one. But Captain Long's is not the first discovery of land that has been made near the South Pole. Land was observed by Captain Wilkes of the U. S. exploring expedition, about twenty years ago, its outlines traced for some distance, and it has ever since figured in atlases. It has not been seen very often, not much is known about it, and therefore every new observation of it will be hailed by those interested in such matters as news from a far country.—Brooklyn Union.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Dec. 11.—General Sherman is the observed of all observers. He visited both houses yesterday, and was called upon by members and Senators, and on distinction of party. He does not conceal his political opinions, and says that if the Copperheads were not pleased with his St. Louis speech they will be no less satisfied when he talks again. He scouted the idea of General Hancock consenting to become the Democratic candidate for President.

The national army of the Republic of Chili is to be reorganized and it is expected will be provided with rifles similar to the Prussian needle gun. A number of models sent for that purpose to the Secretary of War are being examined by the Department.

In the Republic of Ecuador the President and Congress had a conflict which ended with the resignation of the former and the accession to power of the Vice-President. Great excitement prevailed during the time and the President is accused by the public of having thrown the country into disorder by his intrigues, incapacity and corruption.

We are very glad to learn that Congress will probably continue the Freedmen's Bureau till all the Southern States are admitted. To abolish it now would be to endanger reconstruction.—Phila. Post.

Gen. Grant in giving the District Commanders authority over the officers of the Freedmen's Bureau, probably did not reflect that he gives Gen. Hancock power which it is too probable he will abuse.—Philadelphia Post.

FARMS IN FLORIDA.—Commissioner Willson, of the General Land Office, has received returns from the local office at Tallahassee, Florida, showing that during the month of November last, one hundred and twenty-six farms, comprising 7,701 acres, were added to the productive area of that State, under the homestead act of June 21st, 1866, which confines the entries to 80 acres each.

The vote for and against Convention in the State of North-Carolina.

We give below the vote for and against a Convention, as far as received:

Table with columns: For Convention, Against, and County names. Includes counties like Alamance, Alexander, Ashe, Burke, Bertie, Beaufort, Buncombe, Brunswick, Bladen, Chatham, Chowan, Cabarrus, Camden, Caldwell, Catawba, Cherokee, Carteret, Caswell, Clay, Craven, Currituck, Cumberland, Cleveland, Currituck, Columbus, Duplin, Davidson, Davie, Edgecomb, Forsyth, Franklin, Gaston, Guilford, Granville, Greene, Hertford, Halifax, Hatteras, Haywood, Henderson, Johnston, Jones, Jackson, Johnston, Lincoln, Lenoir, McDowell, Mecklenburg, Madison, Macon, Martin, Moore, Montgomery, New Hanover, Northampton, Nash, Orange, Onslow, Pamlico, Person, Polk, Perquimans, Rowan, and Rowan & Davie.

The whole registered vote of the State is 174,717. It is necessary that a majority of this vote, to wit, 87,358, shall have been cast on the question of a Convention. We have returns as above 42,345 votes in 42 Counties. If the vote of the Counties to be heard from should be in proportion to the above Counties, the whole vote of the State on the question will not be less than 130,000. Of this number we may calculate on 90,000 or 100,000 for a Convention.

The Whisky "Ring" in Washington. A Washington correspondent of a western paper writes: "The whisky ring is organizing in Washington for the winter campaign. Exactly what it proposes to do is not known except that, in a general way, it is anxious to avoid the payment of the two-dollar tax, by securing legislation that will render the evasion possible, or rather by preventing any changes in the existing laws; for the returns of the Internal Revenue office will show, if I am not mistaken, that the laws as they stand are admirably suited to the ring, and could hardly be better for it if drawn up avowedly in its interest. The ring will, however, be disappointed and defeated this winter, if the expectations of the leading members of the two Houses of Congress are fulfilled. The fact has at last dawned upon Congress that the prevention of frauds in the revenue department will do more to solve the financial problem about which there is such general excitement than all the theories that have been suggested on the subject. The first step taken toward the needed reform will be the abolition of the warehouse system, under which swindling has been reduced to a science and practised by the most eminently virtuous and respectable men in the land, assisted now and then by a collector or assessor who is open to conviction; as many of these faithful public servants are.

"Some Congressmen favor the reduction of the tax to one dollar, but the best informed members, who have given the subject their attention, believe that it is just as easy to collect two dollars a gallon as one, and that there would be just as much smuggling done at reduced as at present rates. To believe that righteousness can be superinduced by reducing the wages of sin, which, though death in theory, is two dollars a gallon in the whisky ring, is to confess a total ignorance of human nature and an utter disregard of the observations of every-day life. The ring cannot be defeated by a reduction of the tax, but it can be defeated by such preventive legislation as the country has a right to expect, after all it has paid for its experience on this particular subject. If Congress cannot devise some plan to stop the leaks, after what may be learned from the history of the past four years, perhaps the best way would be to remove the tax altogether, and give the people free whisky. As matters stand now the consumers are heavily taxed for the benefit, not of the government, but of the ring. This state of affairs must be altered, and it cannot be altered but by the worse."

Dickens has realized \$20,000 from his four readings in Boston, and it is estimated that during his stay in this country his entire profits will reach \$200,000. He devotes himself closely to his work, and has three new papers in preparation, one of which is to be published in the Atlantic. He will read his "Christmas Carol" at Boston on Christmas eve, after returning from New York.

REORGANIZATION OF THE TREASURY BUREAU.—A project is on foot for a modification of the plan recommended by the Secretary of the Treasury in his report for the reorganization of the bureau of the Treasury Department. The Secretary's plan is to retain the First Comptroller to audit accounts of civil officers, the Second Comptroller to audit those of military officers, and to have created a separate Comptroller over the Customs Accounts. Over all these a Chief Comptroller is to be appointed, to whom appeals from the three subordinate Comptrollers may be taken. The modification alluded to is to preserve all the features of the Secretary's plan except that portion creating the office of Chief Comptroller. In lieu of this it is proposed that the three Comptrollers be constituted a Board of Control, to hold a session once each month, and to have appellate jurisdiction on the decisions of each Comptroller. This modification, it is thought, would secure all the advantages sought by the Secretary, and save the expense to the government of a Chief Comptroller and a bureau of clerks and copyists.—Great Republic.

The Weather. RALEIGH, December 14.—On Thursday we had a very heavy rain in this locality. Thursday night wind in the northwest, quite cold, with a slight fall of snow. Weather quite cold at this time.

List of Members Elect to the Constitutional Convention of North Carolina.

- Alamance.—Henry M. Ray, Republican.
Burke and McDowell.—John S. Parks, W. A. B. Murphy, Republicans.
Brunswick.—E. Legg, Republican.
Beaufort.—Samuel Stillee, W. B. Rodman, Republicans.
Bladen.—A. W. Fisher, F. F. French, Republicans.
Bertie.—Lee, Robins, Republicans.
Cleveland.—Plato Durham, Conservative.
Caswell.—Wilson Carey, Republican, Philip Hodnett, Independent.
Cumberland.—Maj. W. A. Mann, Rev. J. W. Hood, Republicans.
Craven.—Hon. David Heaton, W. H. S. Sweet, C. D. Pierson, Republicans.
Catawba.—Dr. J. R. Ellis, Conservative.
Cabarrus.—W. T. Blume, Republican.
Chowan.—John R. French, Republican.
Carteret.—Abraham Congleton, Republican.
Columbus.—Linnon, Conservative.
Chatham.—John A. McDonald, W. T. Gunter, Republican.
Davidson.—Isaac Kinney, Spence Mulligan, Republicans.
Duplin.—John W. Peterson, Samuel Highsmith, Republicans.
Edgecombe.—Henry A. Dowd, J. H. Baker, Republicans.
Franklin.—James T. Harris, John H. Wilkerson, Republicans.
Forsyth.—E. B. Teague, Republican.
Guilford.—Rev. G. W. Walker, A. W. Tourge, Republicans.
Gates.—Timothy H. Lassiter, Republican.
Granville.—John W. Ragland, J. J. Moore, C. Mayo, Republicans.
Gaston.—M. J. Adjiyott, Republican.
Harnett.—J. M. Turner, Republican.
Halifax.—J. H. Renfrow, J. J. Hays, Henry Epps, Republicans.
Hertford.—J. B. Hare, Conservative.
Johnston.—Dr. Jas. M. Hay, Nathan Gulley, Republicans.
Jones.—David D. Colgrove, Republican.
Lincoln.—Joseph H. King, Republican.
Lenoir.—Richard W. King, Republican.
Mecklenburg.—Edward Fullings, Silas M. Stillwell, Republicans.
Montgomery.—Dr. Geo. A. Graham, Republican.
Nash.—Jacob Ing, Republican.
Northampton.—Henry T. Grant, Rowell C. Parker, Republicans.
New Hanover.—Gen. J. C. Abbott, S. S. Ashley, A. H. Galloway, Republicans.
Orange.—John W. Graham, Dr. Holt, Conservatives.
Person.—Dr. Wm. Merritt, Conservative.
Perquimans.—Dr. William Nicholson, Republican.
Pasquotank and Camden.—C. C. Pool, Matthew Taylor, Republicans.
Pitt.—Gen. Byron Ladin, D. J. Rich, Republicans.
Robeson.—O. S. Hayes, Joshua L. Nance, Republicans.
Rutherford and Polk.—Rev. W. H. Logan, Jesse Rhodes, Republicans.
Rowan and Davie.—Dr. Milton Hobbs, Allen Rose, Isaac M. Shaver, Republicans.
Rockingham.—Henry Barnes, John H. French, Republicans.
Randolph.—R. F. Trogden, T. L. L. Cox, Republicans.
Richmond.—Richard T. Long, Republican.
Stanly.—L. C. Morton, Republican.
Wake.—B. S. D. Williams, S. D. Franklin, J. P. Andrews, James H. Harris, Republicans.
Warren.—John Reid, John A. Hyman, Republicans.
Wayne.—Maj. H. L. Grant, Jesse Hollowell, Republicans.
Wilkes, Iredell, Alexander, Caldwell.—J. Q. A. Bryan, Calvin J. Cowles, C. C. Jones, Wesley Gooden, Jerry Smith, Republicans.
Wilson.—Wiley Daniel, Republican.
Greene.—John M. Patrick.
Madison, Buncombe, Henderson and Transylvania.—G. W. Galagan, Thos. J. Cantler, James H. Duckworth, Republicans.
Mitchell and Yancey.—Julius Garland, Republican.
Haywood and Jackson.—W. B. G. Garrett, Republican.
Macon, Clay and Cherokee.—G. W. Dickson, Mark Fay, Republicans.
Moore.—Sweet S. McDonald, Republican.
Samson.—Joseph D. Pearsall, Alexander Williams, Conservatives.
Stokes.—Riley F. Petree, Republican.
Union.—William Newsum, Republican.
Washington and Tyrrell.—Edmund W. Jones, Republican.
Martin.—S. W. Watts, Republican.
Onslow.—Jasper Etheridge, Republican.
Yancey.—Garland, Republican.
The above returns foot up 96 Republicans, 10 Conservatives, and one Independent. We count, with the 96 two Republicans from Bertie, whose names in full we have not learned, and do not, therefore, give them in our list. Thirteen delegates to hear from nine of whom are in all probability Republicans.