

[N. Y. Tribune, Jan. 29.]

PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS.

On the 20th Jan. the Senate passed the Invalid Pension bill. Mr. Benjamin reported a substitute for Mr. Mason's bill, by which the war-making power is conferred upon the Executive. The main difference between the substitute and the original bill is, that the President is by the former required to make an immediate report to Congress of what he may do under previous provisions. After further discussion of the Pacific Railroad bill, the Senate adjourned.

In the House, the Committee on Mr. Sherman's motion to investigate charges of corruption in the Navy Department was announced.

Taking up the bill amending the Pre-emption Laws, the House adopted Mr. Grow's amendment, prohibiting the exposure of public lands for sale unless returns of the surveys thereof shall have been made ten years or more previously, and then rejected the bill by four majority.

Congress on the 21st was engaged upon the private calendar.

Congress did little on the 22d. The Senate was not in session. The House, after considerable objection, received resolutions in favor of a protective tariff from the Legislature of Pennsylvania.

On the 24th the Senators from Pennsylvania presented memorials from their constituents in favor of specific duties. Mr. Slidel, from the Committee on Foreign Affairs, made a long report on the Thirty Million bill for Cuba, recommending the purchase of that island immediately, as "a measure of economy, before the price be raised." Mr. Mason, while expressing his agreement with the conclusions of the majority of the Committee, dissented from the proposition that it is the policy of this Government to extend its dominions by acquisitions of territory. Mr. Seward, representing the minority of the Committee, introduced a bill requesting the President to transmit to Congress, at the commencement of the next session, a statement of the then relations between this country and Spain, and of the condition of the Treasury and the Army and Navy.

The House refused to suspend the rules for the purpose of devoting the first two days of February to the consideration of Territorial business, as Mr. Stephens desired. A resolution limiting the debate on private bills next Saturday to two five-minute speeches on each side, was adopted. A bill appropriating \$10,000 to the payment of witnesses before Investigating Committees, the officer summoning them not to be allowed more than ten cents a mile, was passed. The residue of the morning session was devoted to the consideration, in Committee, of the Consular and Diplomatic Appropriation bill. Some home-truths were told, but no action was taken. Mr. Branch of North Carolina, from the Committee on Foreign Affairs, reported the Thirty-Million Cuba bill. In the evening session, Mr. Clark B. Cochrane spoke in favor of a Homestead bill, and Mr. Davies of Mass. against the abolition of fishing bounties.

On the 25th, the Senate chose Mr. Fitzpatrick, Chairman pro tem., during the necessary absence of the Vice-President. Explanations and inquiries followed, respecting the reports of the Executive session, which found their way into the papers, and the important discovery was made of a room near the Senate Chamber, in which were two black cats, half-starved, and half-crazy. The residue of the session was occupied with the Pacific Railroad bill, Mr. Johnson, of Tennessee, making a lengthened speech.

In the House, Mr. English reported adversely to the memorial of the Mount Vernon Association, asking for the use of the franking privilege—which memorial was finally tabled—and reported a bill abolishing the franking privilege altogether. The Consular and Diplomatic Appropriation bill was discussed in Committee. A salary of \$7,500 was voted to Mr. Townsend Harris as Minister Resident at Japan. Some Southern Members chafed at the appropriation for the return and support of the cargoes of captured slaves. Several memorials asking for the establishment of new mail steam ship lines were laid on the table.

On the 26th, in the House, a report was made adverse to the bill permitting creditors to sue the Government in the Court of Claims. A bill was reported to punish forgery of land warrants. A joint resolution, instructing the Government to procure from foreign countries a modification of their revenue systems in respect to American tobacco, with a view to the removal of present restrictions, was passed. The Homestead bill, introduced by Mr. Kelsey of New York, was referred to the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Grow urged the force of Gen. Jackson's principle, that the public lands should be dedicated to the use of actual settlers, and gave notice that he should ask a vote to-day. The consideration of the Consular and Diplomatic bill was resumed in Committee. The pending amendment, forbidding the expenditure for the support and education of recaptured Africans, was rejected. Mr. Crawford of Georgia then moved that the appropriations for this purpose be cut down from \$75,000 to \$45,000. An exciting debate followed.

Washington---Behind the Curtain.

You would be amazed if you were behind the curtain here, and became aware of the extent to which partizan favorites and parasites are allowed to plunder the treasury. Nearly all the loud-mouthed politicians, who follow President-making as a business, and who indulge in speeches and indite articles for party journals—are privileged dippers into the Treasury, in some form or other, generally in the "contract way"—sometimes to very large amounts, by which many of them become wealthy, and they all would, did not their dissipated habits require every dollar they obtain.

Pennsylvania, I regret to say, has its full share of these patriotic sharks, who, when they are before the people, during a canvass, talk with solemn faces about economy, retrenchment, and a judicious administration of the government; but the moment they are victorious, they prey upon the said government with the voracity of vultures.—[Ger. Tel.]

HARD TIMES AT THE NATIONAL AND STATE CAPITALS.—The comparative dearth of money in the Treasury at Washington, and in the State's strong box at Albany, is likely to prostrate many well grounded hopes of appropriation for public and private claims, and to send early away from attendance on the respective legislative bodies many whose presence there has been as regular, if not quite as useful, as that of the representatives of the people. In plain English, the times are hard, both at the National and State Capitals, and money is not to be had through the accustomed channel of congressional or legislative appropriations. Many nicely concocted schemes will be likely to fail, and perhaps some worthy demands upon the Treasury be rejected this year, which in flush times, with an overflowing Treasury, would slide through with great ease and facility.—[Jour. of Com., Jan. 20.]

WASHINGTON CITY.—That Congress has ever manifested a most paternal regard for the inhabitants of the "city of magnificent distances," fully compensating them for their want of representation in Congress, is shown by a recent local paragraph in one of their papers. It appears that since Washington City was established as the capital, Congress has expended upon it the enormous sum of twenty-five million seven hundred and fifteen thousand five hundred and fifty-two dollars!

UNLAWFUL CALLINGS PURSUED IN NEW YORK.—The New York Herald presents the following statistics, exhibiting the amount of vice at present existing in that metropolis:

	No. of Persons made	Money
Shops, &c. engaged annually		
Ticket Swindling	9	\$45,000
Mock Auctions	12	60,000
Lottery Dealers	36	1,000,000
Policy Dealers	450	2,000,000
Gambling Hells	75	305
Low Houses of Prostitution	225	3,000,000
Bogus Hotels	4	10,000
Fortune Tellers	26	25
Obscene Publishers	25	20,000
Street Prostitutes	500	500,000
Runners for above Institutions	300	300,000
Professional Street Beggars	220	60,000
Low Groceries	4,000	7,000,000
Total	13,598	\$12,671,000

By the above statistics it will be seen that the estimated average receipt of persons engaged in the various walks of vice and minor crimes is nearly \$1,000 a year each. If this be thought too high, and the half were estimated to be a fair average, it would make the amount of depredations of these classes of persons (which does not include burglars, counterfeiters, shop-lifters, &c.) equal to over six millions of dollars annually.

FOSSIL TREES IN THE BALTIMORE COAL MINES.—On Wednesday last we saw one of the greatest natural curiosities of the coalfield, while attending some ladies on a visit to the Baltimore coal mines, near the borough. It will be remembered that ten or twelve acres of the mine which had been worked fell in a year or two ago, crushing the pillars left for support, and filling that portion with rock and slate from the roof. Through these masses of rock the superintendent of the mines, Mr. Frederick Landmesser, has explored and discovered the remains of a forest of trees which had been embedded in the slate rock above the large vein, fragments of which, by the fall had been detached, and now lie in confusion; stumps, roots, limbs, and impressions of bark, in the mine.

Among the curiosities are two huge stumps as perfect as if just drawn from the earth by a stump machine, the roots cut off where they had entered the ground, and the surface looking as if the bark had been taken off while the sap was running. In the rock above can be traced the ends of the logs from which the stumps have fallen, and in one place the body of the tree protrudes, the surface presenting the impression of bark.—[Wilkesbarre (Pa.) Record.]

COAL ON THE PACIFIC.—Gov. Mason, of Washington Territory, in his recent message to the Legislature, makes the following reference to the Bellingham Bay coal mines:

The coal veins of Bellingham Bay are the only ones which have been worked to any extent, and their resources have been recently more fully developed; a shaft has been sunk to the depth of 500 feet, and coal bearing a fair comparison with the best English coals procured. The thickness of the vein is 25 feet, and the quality semi-bituminous. The analysis of the Superintendent gives—

Carbon	70 per cent.
Volatile matter	23 "
Ashes	7 "

In order more fully to develop this great interest, and as a matter of convenience to such of our steam vessels of war as may cruise in these waters, I will suggest, as a subject of memorial, the establishment by the United States of a coal depot within our waters, similar to what they have maintained in other parts of the world, at which a certain number of tons should always be kept on hand.

'MARINE' AXIOMS.—The ocean of Love is not always a Pacific ocean. The most squalid sea is infancy.—[N. Y. Post.]

WHAT SHALL THE END BE?

We are fast approaching the conviction that Congress is a superfluity, as we had long since settled in our minds that politicians are not the most reliable of human beings.

The country is said to be divided into two great parties—Republican and Democrat. The success of the former might be regarded a national calamity, while that of the latter, as at present organized, is by no means a national blessing. The Government is now administered by the Democracy—a Democratic President—Democratic House and Democratic Senate. Under their rule it is reduced to poverty, and driven to borrow for a living.

The Nation's debt is enormous, and constantly increasing, with no steps taken for its reduction. The three leading measures—if they may be so called—of this session, as we learn from a Democratic cotemporary, are the Pacific Railroad—the acquisition of Cuba—and the remodeling of the Tariff. Appearances indicate that nothing efficient will be done with the latter, Spain defies us to obtain Cuba, the brightest but also the last jewel remaining in the crown of her former grandeur, and the Senate has effectually put a quietus on the Pacific Railroad project.

If the present Democratic powers are to do anything for the good of the country, the period has arrived when they should make a beginning.

Up to this time, they have bored the country with long and windy harangues, misruled the people, ignored their true interests, and been equally lavish with their promises of economy, and their expenditures of money. If, therefore, nought of good and much of evil be the result of their acts of omission and commission, it is difficult to see how the Democracy will be able to render an account of their present stewardship to the people in 1860. Having control of the Government if they do not administer it properly, they must expect defeat to follow fast in the footsteps of their imbecility.—[The West.]

CONGRESSIONAL GRIEF.—Some of the newspapers are criticising the eulogies recently delivered in Congress on the death of one of the members during the summer recess. The rhetoric was of the most dolorous kind, and if the speakers were to be believed, the nation is doing nothing but wringing tears from cotton handkerchiefs over the deceased member's body, which had probably been interred for months before all this great grief found its proper conduit.

A lamentable spectacle is a congressional body in tears, and its grief rises with its eloquence. It is not sufficient that one member recouats the public virtues of the deceased Smith or Brown. His words serve to open the floodgates of congressional woe, and very soon the whole body is dissolved in tears. Jones mentions what a public patriot the deceased was, and he sobs sadly over the thought that public virtue will henceforth be unable to sustain itself with such an example removed from before it. Thompson takes up the lamentation, and he sees all nature weeping in concert with their sorrows. One member is too big with grief for words, and so he inflicts his assumed sorrow for an hour upon his fellow members. One heart is breaking with its burden, and another is so full that the tears, singularly enough under the circumstances, absolutely refuse to flow.

With all this stream of public sorrow there is mingled a ludicrous and mawkish sentiment, tricked out in hyperbolic figures of speech and exaggerated phraseology, that show the insincerity of the performance, which usually winds up with an adjournment for a few days, to enable the prostrated wisdom of the nation to recover its composure and its spirits.

There might be some excuse for this tremendous outpouring of sorrow, upon any sudden bereavement in the midst of the session. But when we find, at the opening of nearly every session, the same scenes enacted for all who had died in the interim—old griefs renewed which had been forgotten for months by those most nearly allied to the deceased, or if not forgotten, nurtured in secret as things too sacred to be opened to the public gaze—the performance becomes not only supremely ridiculous but extravagantly expensive. All this public sorrow has to flow through the telegraph wires, at a cost to the newspapers of the country of thousands of dollars. The public business has also to be stopped for days, till the members have had their cry out; while the entire public are laughing at the folly of the exhibition. Why not exercise a little common sense in this matter? When a member dies during the session, let another allude to it in becoming terms, and then let the matter drop, and the public business go on as usual. If he die in the interim, it is sufficient that his friends know the melancholy fact, without announcing it with "windy suspirations of forced breath," in the public assembly of the nation.—[Philadelphia Ledger.]

Traveling in the "Far West."

One portion of the United States and Canada, lying west and north of Michigan, called the "Upper Peninsula," is entirely shut out from the rest of the world during the winter months. The Detroit Advertiser publishes an interesting description of the mode of traveling during that period:—

The mails are carried by Indians and half breeds, when the traveling is good, on their backs, and when it is bad, by dog trains.

The snow falls to a depth of from two to five or six feet. The snow-shoes used by the men are about eight or ten inches in width, and from two and a half to four and a half feet in length. They are flat, and are made of a bow of maple wood, round at the toe and coming to a point at the heel, where the ends are fastened by thongs of raw deer skin. The space is filled by a lace work of raw deer or moose skin strings, with the

exception of a small space immediately in front of a cross piece of wood, upon which the ball of the foot rests. The shoes used by women are smaller than those used by the men, and of a different shape. The feet of the person using the shoes are incased in moccasins of buckskin, sufficiently large to admit three or four thicknesses of blanket. The blanket is used not only to keep the feet warm, but also to prevent the toes from being chafed by the strings of buckskin which are passed over them, and by which the shoes are fastened to the feet.

The dog trains used are made of a flat board about an inch in thickness, ten inches in width, and from six to ten and twelve feet in length, and are turned up in front. At each side of the train a rope is fastened, running the whole length of it, and a "train cloth" of canvas is used, considerably larger than the train. The articles to be carried are placed on the cloth, from one end of the train to the other. The cloth is then wrapped over them, and laced up by means of a string passing under the ropes at the side.

For a tramp the edibles carried are, usually—some flour, pilot bread, salt pork, tea and sugar, and cooking utensils, a tin kettle and a frying pan. The food for the dogs is generally tallow and corn meal. The bed clothes are a single blanket to each man. Indians or half breeds are employed as guides and assistants during a tramp.

Imagine a white man and an Indian about starting on a "tramp" of three or four hundred miles, through a forest unfrequented by all living beings except wild birds and animals. The provisions are packed upon the train, the dogs are harnessed to it, one ahead of the other, to the number of four or five. The Indian takes the lead, with his snow shoes, the dogs follow with the train, and the "pale face" brings up their rear, with yells to the dogs in front of him. Tramp, tramp, tramp, until noon, when a halt is made; the train is unracked, the kettle, tea and sugar is produced, a fire lighted, and, after taking a cup of tea, the word is given and again the tramp commences. The party makes another halt in time to prepare the camping ground before the night sets in. The dogs are left standing in their harness, the Indian takes the axe and cuts enough fuel to last till morning, the white man uses a snow shoe for a shovel and clears away the snow until the ground is reached. A shelter is then built over the cleared space, of poles covered with evergreen boughs. The front of the "wigwam" is left open, and the ground covered with hemlock boughs. Immediately opposite the front a rou-ling log fire is built, the dogs unharnessed, and the supper prepared.

The supper is composed of a cup of tea, some pork cooked in the frying pan and some flour cooked in the fat left from the pork. After supper the pipes and tobacco are produced, and the white man smokes in the front of the fire; while the Indian cooks the supper of corn and tallow for the dogs in the same kettle in which the tea had been made but a few minutes before. After being satisfied with his "smoke," the pale face and Indian wrap their blankets around them, and lay down side by side on the hemlock boughs, with their feet to the fire, and sleep as sweetly and as soundly as "e'er did king upon the richest damask."

In the morning, before day, the Indian prepares the breakfast, which is eaten and the travelers again move on. The dogs are fed but once a day, and the reason is, they travel much better. A distance of thirty miles per day is traveled with ease by those accustomed to the use of snow shoes. When, toward Spring, the days become longer and the sun hotter, the traveling is done at night, and the resting and sleeping by day.

The veteran Indian "snow-shoer" will never drink water, or eat snow, during the time he is on his journey; as he says it makes him "very much weak." The Indians and half-breeds, on coming in from a long journey, on their arrival at their place of destination, will, if night is near and a dance is in prospect, stay about until the ball begins, go to it, and dance until daylight. We have known of parties of young men putting on their snow-shoes on Christmas morning, walking thirty miles to a ball, dancing all night, and then walking a distance of twelve miles to breakfast.

We have in our mind one of the most wonderful feats of pedestrianism which, if it were not well substantiated, would be difficult of belief. It took place a number of years ago. Mr. Schoolcraft, residing at Sault St. Marie, wished to send an express to Mackinac, distant by the trail about seventy-five miles. He sent for a half breed called La Branch, and told him that he must go to Mackinac, and that he must start at 12 o'clock, M., that day. La Branch objected, as there was to be a ball in the evening of the next day. Schoolcraft told him that he must go, and that as he wanted to attend the ball, if he was back from Mackinac by 10 o'clock the next evening, he would give him twenty dollars extra pay. At 12 o'clock he started, and the next day at 10 p.m., appeared again, having gone the whole distance—150 miles—in 34 hours. After receiving the promised twenty dollars, he said "he could have been in by 8 o'clock, but he waited two hours on the hill back of the town, for fear that he might get in ahead of time, and lose his money." After leaving Mr. Schoolcraft's store, La Branch went to the ball, and tripped the moccasined toe until daylight.

REPUDIATION IN WISCONSIN.—Mass meetings were being held in several counties of Wisconsin, and the tax payers have entered a solemn protest against paying any more taxes. They say that the legislature has been "unreasonably extravagant and prodigal"—that they have suffered the burdens imposed upon them long enough—have wanted the comforts of life, and let their children go ragged and untaught long enough. They therefore resolved "to pay no part of any tax, either state, county, or town, now claimed of us for this year—and maybe none hereafter."