

DOINGS OF CONGRESS.

Dec. 10th, in the Senate, Mr. Foote offered a resolution that Waldo P. Johnson, by sympathizing with and participating in the rebellion against the United States, has been guilty of conduct incompatible with his duty as a Senator of the United States, and that he, therefore, be expelled from the Senate of the United States, which was laid over.

Mr. Harlan introduced a bill to authorize the President to acquire territory for the settlement of free persons of African descent, which was referred to the committee on public lands.

Mr. Wilson introduced a bill for the reorganization of the medical department of the army.

Mr. Nesmith introduced a bill, which was referred to the committee on territories, to provide for the protection of overland emigrants to California and Oregon.

Mr. Harris introduced a bill in reference to the sale of spirituous liquors in the District of Columbia, designed to render more operative the law passed last summer, and provides for trial by any justice of the peace, which was referred to the committee on judiciary.

In the House, on motion of Roscoe Conkling, of New York, the Attorney-General was requested to report his views as to the means of obtaining the retrocession of that part of Virginia formerly belonging to the District of Columbia.

Mr. Potter, from the committee on public lands, reported a bill providing a homestead to actual settlers, and providing bounties for soldiers in lieu of grants of public lands. He explained that the homestead feature of the bill was heretofore passed, but there is an addition that all soldiers, marines and seamen shall be entitled to the provisions of this act. It also confers a bounty of \$30 on the three months' volunteers. The consideration of the bill was postponed till the 18th.

The House concurred in the resolution from the Senate for a joint committee to inquire into the conduct of the present war, with power to send for persons and papers.

Mr. Pendleton, of Ohio, moved that the memorial of Messrs. Howard, Getchell and Davis, Baltimore police commissioners, be referred back to the committee on judiciary, with instructions declaring that Congress alone has power, under the Constitution, to suspend the writ of habeas corpus; that the exercise of that power by any other department of the government is an usurpation, and dangerous to the public liberty; that the persons above named be delivered to the marshal, to the end that they may be indicted, with the right of speedy trial, if there be probable cause for such a proceeding. Mr. P. spoke at length on the subject, and said, if the President can suspend one provision of the Constitution, he can all, and reduce the nation to the condition of slaves, by changing the theory of the government. Any nation willing to adopt this theory is so lost to a manly sense of independence, dignity, and to a just consciousness of their courage and duty of defending the government, that the yoke is a fit emblem of their degradation. No one should listen to the doctrine of State necessity, the history of which is written in the wreck of public liberty.

Mr. Bingham replied that all his colleague had just said, or could say, had been fully and satisfactorily answered by the argument of the Attorney-General, heretofore submitted. Notwithstanding the ability of his colleague, he had been unable to disguise the fact that the time contemplated by the words of the Constitution for the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, was when rebellion was trying to shake down the pillars of the Constitution. It was no time to be splitting hairs as to whether Congress or the President should first exercise the power.

On motion of Mr. Bingham, the whole subject was tabled, 108 against 26.

December 11th, in the Senate, Mr. Simmons presented a petition from citizens of Rhode Island, praying for the emancipation of the slaves of rebels without compensation, the loyal men to be compensated.

Mr. Wilcox offered a resolution that the Military Committee be instructed to inquire what reduction may be made in the expenses of the army; which was adopted.

Mr. Powell presented the resolution of the Legislature of Kentucky, asking Congress to afford relief to the distressed people of Ireland.

Mr. Chandler offered a resolution, which was adopted, instructing the Military Committee to inquire into the expediency or appointing a committee from the two Houses, with power to retire any improper officer of the army and navy.

Mr. Nesmith announced the death of Edward Dickinson Baker, paying a brief tribute to his bravery and worth, and offered the usual resolution. Messrs. McDougall, Brown and others followed.

In the House, Mr. Bingham introduced a bill forfeiting the property of rebels; also a joint resolution directing the Provost Court of Alexandria to keep the property of rebels until further action by Congress.

Mr. Lovejoy, of Illinois, offered a resolution instructing a committee to report a bill establishing diplomatic relations between Hayti and the United States.

Mr. Vallandigham said—We want no nigger ambassador here. A debate arising, the resolution was laid over.

Mr. Blair introduced a bill to more effectually punish treason; also for the collection of taxes to remunerate loyal citizens for loss of property, and to provide homesteads for the soldiers engaged in suppressing the rebellion.

The consideration of the following resolution was announced:

Whereas, Major-General Halleck of the Western Department has issued an order prohibiting negroes from coming within the lines of our army, and excluding those already under the protection of our troops, and

Whereas, A different policy and practice prevails in other departments by the direct sanction of the administration, and whereas said order is cruel and inhuman, and in the judgment of this House, based upon no military necessity, therefore

Resolved, That the President be respectfully requested to direct General Halleck to recall said order, or cause it to conform to the practice in other departments of the army.

A lengthy discussion followed.

Mr. Stevens said if the resolution is to have a good effect—especially in the West—the sooner it is passed the better. The allegation of Gen. Halleck that fugitive slaves give information to the enemy is too bold a pretence to justify him. The return of fugitives was intended by General McClellan and followed by Kelly, Dix and others. All these cases are a disgrace to the profession of arms. If such return has been made by the orders of the commanding generals they deserve to have the epaulettes stripped from their shoulders; if by higher authority, then God forgive them, they know not what they do.

Mr. Lovejoy expressed his honest conviction that such orders were issued by the commanding Generals without authority from the President. He was satisfied of this fact; while the President does not remove or cashier them as he (Lovejoy) would do. He did not believe that they had power for such inhuman or shameful measures.

Mr. Blair said Gen. Halleck had informed him that he had no idea of doing anything contrary to the law of the last Congress, and the policy of the Government. It was gross injustice to Gen. Halleck to state that he ordered the return of fugitive slaves to disloyal masters.

Mr. Lovejoy said that the testimony of every general in the field is that the slaves are true, loyal and faithful, and said they were the most reliable scouts we have.

Mr. Blair said Gen. Halleck's simple object was to exclude from the camp such persons as could convey information to the enemy. Gen. Halleck had stated that slaves came into camp at Cairo to sell fruit, and returning to Kentucky and Southern Missouri fell into the hands of the rebels, who obtained information of them.

Mr. Fouke said officers regarded General Halleck's order as most wise and salutary. The allusion to the fidelity of these slaves was untrue. The army was misled on the 7th of November by slaves. His own regiment was thus led into ambush. Let the resolution pass and recruiting in Illinois will cease. The army will stand by the order of General Halleck.

Mr. Lovejoy asked Mr. Fouke what was done with the negro who led them into an ambush.

Mr. Fouke replied that he sent out a scout who brought him in, and the fact was reported to Gen. McClellan. He did not know what had become of him—he had no time to look after niggers. If his colleague paid less attention to niggers and more to the affairs of the country we would get along much better.

Mr. Blair said Gen. Halleck intended to use slaves to the advantage of the government, and if it would weaken the enemy he would take them away from him, but he did not intend to have them inside his lines.

Mr. Julian said the policy of delivering up fugitive slaves was not practiced. Last Friday one found his way into the camp of Col. Bown's Indiana regiment, and that officer refused to surrender him until ordered to do so by Secretary Cameron. He presumed the Administration sanctioned such proceedings.

Mr. Blair inferred differently from what he read in the President's message.

Mr. Kellogg said the administration has had nothing to do with that order, and the administration would not indicate such a policy to the army.

On motion of Mr. Vallandigham the motion was laid on the table—78 against 64.

Mr. Blair offered a resolution declaring it just to recognize the eminent and patriotic services of the late General Lyon, and tendering the thanks of Congress to the officers and brave soldiers under him, who sustained the honor of his flag and achieved a victory at Springfield, Mo., and in order to commemorate the event each regiment shall bear on its colors the word "Springfield" in letters of gold; and this resolution be read at the headquarters of the different regiments of the army.

Mr. Blair said he believed the government had taken no notice whatever of the death of Gen. Lyon, and hence the propriety of the resolution. He knew him well. One never lived who cared more for his country and less for himself.

Mr. Edwards moved that the last part of the resolution be stricken out, believing that as we are to have a war of long continuance we should not be too lavish at the outset of establishing precedents, as the neglect to notice similar occurrences hereafter may result in embarrassment.

Mr. Edwards' motion did not pass, and the resolution was adopted.

The resolution recognizing the independence of Hayti came up.

Mr. Cox offered an amendment that the committee on foreign affairs inquire into the expediency of doing so, instead of direct instructions to report a bill for that purpose. He said instead of bringing up so frequently

the pestiferous negro the country expects Congress to give a little time to more important subjects.

The amendment was agreed to, and the resolution adopted.

Mr. Vallandigham called attention to the fact that a Select Committee was appointed at the last Congress to consider the abolition of the franking privilege. The bill reported was first on the calendar, and he desired members to examine it before it came up for consideration.

Mr. Colfax remarked that the Committee on the Post Office had framed a bill abolishing the franking privilege, which they propose to report next week. He reminded members that the Committee will not, as heretofore, invite such new route as members may suggest, but will require members to show the absolute necessity for the establishment of new routes.

The Bronze Doors for the National Capitol.

The artist Rogers was commissioned by the Government, some years ago, to model and have cast in bronze folding doors for the Capitol. The doors have just been cast at Munich, and an English writer who has seen them gives the following description of the designs which ornament them:

"The bronze doors intended for the Capitol at Washington, designed and modeled at Rome by the American artist, Rogers, have lately been on view at the Royal Foundry, where they were cast. The workmanship, as is always the case with whatever emanates from the Munich foundry, is admirable. There is a sharpness in the lines and a finish in the minutest detail, which are in the highest degree creditable. Of the doors themselves it is not easy to convey an adequate idea by a mere description; for an enumeration of all that is represented might induce the belief that there was a crowding of objects, and that the allotted space was overfilled; and this is not the case. Each door—the whole forms a folding door—is divided into four compartments or panels. Thus, with a semi-circular space above, which has the breadth of both the doors together, there are nine divisions, in each of which an important moment of Columbus's life is represented.

"The figures stand out in full relief, and some of the groups are eminently successful. The crowning event of the discoverer's career occupies the commanding spot over the top of the doors. Here, Columbus, standing on a mound, forms the central figure. He has just landed from a boat, and with the standard of Arragon and Castile planted on the new soil, and, with sword upraised in his right hand, he takes possession of the land in the name of his sovereigns. Some boatmen are still in the skiff, others are kneeling on the shore, while a group of Indians, peeping from behind a tree on the opposite side, look on in wondering astonishment. In one compartment is represented the triumphant entry of Columbus into Madrid, on his first return from America, amid crowds of gazers at him, the hero of the triumph, and at the Indians, who precede the procession with parquets on their upraised arms.

"The next panel is occupied with a sadder story. Here Columbus, in chains, surrounded by a sorrowing population, is about to embark for Europe. Then, the 'last scene of all,' accomplishing his 'strange eventful history,' we see him on his death-bed, attended only by a nun and some priests, who administer to him the consolations of religion. His son stands beside him. In the thickness of the door itself niches are formed at certain intervals, and in these are small whole-length figures of the great contemporaries of Columbus—kings, statesmen, ecclesiastics and warriors. In the center, close to each other, are two such lines of niches, while on both sides a single row of figures, one above the other, fills up the intermediate space between the outer edge of the panels and the door-post. The large bosses, so often seen on doors, are here the heads of those historians who have written on the discovery of America.

"The ornaments below each niche are heads of animals indigenous to the country, with fruits and flowers entwined, also characteristic of the New World. Every ornament is appropriate, and, though they are manifold, there is no confusion. As there will be no chance of the work being forwarded to the place of its destination for some time to come, it might be possible to induce the authorities to allow it to be sent to England meanwhile, where it could not fail to be looked at with the greatest interest. The Exhibition of next year might present the desired opportunity for taking such a step. The artist would be glad that so good an occasion offered for making his work known; and the Americans would surely not be unwilling to show the world how munificently they had come forward to erect a grand national monument."

VERY COOL.—A gentleman on a visit to Washington one day very coolly opened the door of the Senate Chamber, and was about to pass in, when the doorkeeper asked, "What do you mean by that? A governor, an ex-member of Congress, or a foreign minister?" The stranger replied that he was a minister. "From what court or country?" asked the official. Very gravely pointing up, the stranger replied, "From Heaven, sir." To this the doorkeeper waggishly replied, "This government at present, holds no intercourse with that foreign power."

Affairs at Charleston.

The North American publishes an interesting statement of affairs at Charleston, made by a Union man who recently escaped from that city, from which the following is taken:

"It is certain that the blockade is frequently, if not constantly, violated at Charleston, not only by the inland channels to Edisto, St. Helena, and other inlets, but mainly by the Maffit, or northern channel of Charleston harbor. They are certain of twelve feet of water by this channel, and as the blockading fleet lies in the main ship channel, some six or seven miles southward from Fort Sumter, our ships are too far from the northern channel to pursue the rebel vessels successfully. The privateer Gordon came in by this channel early in the summer, at mid-day, and went out the same way on October 12th, with Mason and Slidell on board. She has since come in by the Edisto inlet and inland route, and now lies at Charleston. Within a few weeks past the brig West Indian, with naval stores, the bark Helen (formerly the Rowena, of Philadelphia), also with naval stores the new schooner Gen. Ripley, with rice, with others of less note, have gone out by the same channel. The Nashville also went on October 26, taking a crowd of naval officers and cadets for the officering of prizes or privateers, if any could be caught or engaged to act as privateers.

As to the Confederate forces on the coast of South Carolina, there are three regiments from North Carolina, with a battalion of artillery, and five to eight South Carolina regiments on the railroad toward Savannah, mainly at Coosawhatchie. With the Georgia troops there are in all about twelve thousand men within easy reach of Beaufort and of Hilton Head island. Most of the South Carolina troops, numbering thirteen regiments, are still in Virginia.

There are now very few troops above Charleston on or near the coast, the movement of all that can be moved being rapid toward Beaufort and Charleston. There are probably but two or three thousand more available to send to the coast toward Savannah, without weakening Charleston.

There is a general armament of small boats at Charleston, and five new gun-boats are building. The mosquito fleet of Tatnall has been up there two or three times, but it is now all below Beaufort.

The condition of the lower coast district is evidently one of great disorder and alarm. Many of the planters are burning their cotton, gin houses, and gathered crops. The names of two planters are given in the Courier of Friday, the 26th, as having made the patriotic sacrifice.

There are two powder mills in the Pickens district, one in North Carolina, and an abundance of powder at Charleston and elsewhere. Arms are also abundant, the great stock in the arsenal and the late importations by the Bermuda and Fingal being sufficient to arm everybody.

The Bermuda brought about 3,000, of which Charleston got about 1,500, and the Fingal brought 12,500 superior Enfield rifles, entering at Savannah on Wednesday, Nov. 14. Percussion caps are made in Charleston, and cannon are also cast and rifled, a foundry establishment having fully three hundred men at work at the business, and a successful percussion cap-making machine in operation. All other military equipments are abundantly made.

Provisions are abundant and cheap. The Courier of Nov. 28, quotes flour at \$10 to \$11, bacon and hams 31 cts. per lb., salt \$10 per sack, brown sugar 8 to 12 cts., no coffee to be had, and cotton 8 cts. for Upland. Generally, provisions are more abundant than is supposed at the North, throughout all the South Atlantic States."

Late from Mexico.

The latest intelligence from Mexico received by way of San Francisco, is to the last of November.

General Marquez had been defeated at Las Cruces by Generals Tapia and Caravajal, losing nearly six hundred men killed and wounded, and two pieces of artillery. The Conservative chief then fled to the mountains, to unite his remaining forces with those of General Mejia.

The news of the election of Juan de Bourbon as King of Mexico was received at the Capital, and much discussed. Congress had been in secret session on the subject, and propositions were under consideration for the confiscation of the property and expulsion of Spanish subjects. It was then believed that Spain only would intervene in the affairs of Mexico, and that England and France would not engage in any acts of conquest. It was also understood that Mr. Corwin, the American Minister, had offered the Government money and men to defend itself against all forces that should undertake to blockade Vera Cruz, as threatened. The amount of money promised by Corwin was said to be \$4,000,000, and as high a number as 30,000 men were talked of as to be relied upon from the United States, if needed to protect Mexico against conquest.

A Mr. Pickett had arrived at Mexico, to represent the Southern Confederacy. The nature of his mission was not understood.