

## DOINGS OF CONGRESS.

In the House, on the 14th, the Naval appropriation bill was under consideration in Committee on the Whole.

Amendments were offered, and some of them adopted, among which was one by Mr. Sedgwick, for building additional gunboats \$15,000,000.

Mr. Lovejoy asked how much had already been appropriated for that purpose.

Mr. Sedgwick said, we have made a special appropriation of \$10,000,000 for building iron-clad gun-boats.

Mr. Lovejoy asked, is this for the same class of vessels?

Mr. Sedgwick replied, this is for an entirely different class of vessels; for the same class of gun-boats we have already in use.

Mr. Lovejoy; it seems a very large amount, but if it is necessary, I am ready to vote for it.

Mr. F. A. Conkling; I wish to inquire if this is for the twenty additional gun-boats authorized by the act which passed the other day?

Mr. Sedgwick; no, sir. This is for an entirely different class of boats. Those provided for the other day were iron-clad gun-boats.

Mr. Conkling; are these to be in addition to those authorized the other day?

Mr. English; those are to be iron-clad; these are not.

Mr. Sedgwick; they are an entirely different class of vessels.

A joint-resolution providing a stenographer for the joint committee to inquire into the conduct of the war; the question being on its reference was taken up, and a lengthy discussion followed, during which the battle of Manassas with the circumstances that led to the defeat of the Federal forces was debated till the hour of adjournment.

Both Houses adjourned till Monday the 17th ult.

February 17th, in the Senate, Mr. Harlan presented a communication from the Secretary of the Interior, in regard to the recently discovered gold mines of California.

Mr. Harris presented a petition from citizens of New York, asking that the full rank of major-general be conferred on Gen. John E. Wool.

Mr. Latham, from the Military committee, reported a bill authorizing a survey in relation to the telegraph to the Amoor river.

On motion of Mr. Nesmith, the joint resolution relative to the mode of the payment of the awards for settling the Oregon and Washington war debt, was taken up.

Mr. Lane asked to read a dispatch, received by Gen. McClellan, of the capture of Fort Donelson by the land forces of the United States.

There was laughter on the floor and in the galleries when it was said that Floyd had escaped. The dispatch was greeted with loud applause in the galleries.

Vice-President: That's all right. (Renewed applause.)

Vice-President: The chair rules that such applause is neither approving nor censuring the senator. (Laughter.)

Mr. Grimes said he had also information that the city of Savannah, in the State of Georgia, had also been taken (renewed applause.)

The resolution in regard to the Oregon war debt was then passed.

On motion of Mr. Harris, the bill to change and regulate the Circuit and District Courts for the Northern District of New York, was taken up and passed.

Mr. Johnson asked consent to offer a joint resolution tendering the thanks of Congress to the officers, soldiers and seamen of the army and navy for their heroic gallantry, under the providence of God, for the brilliant victories they have achieved over the enemies of the Constitution and the Union, which was passed.

In the House, on the 17th, Mr. Colfax asked and readily obtained permission to make a statement relative to Fort Donelson.

Amid profound silence, Mr. Colfax, said that Gen. McClellan had authorized him to inform the House that he had just received a dispatch from Cairo, informing him of the arrival of the gunboat Carondelet at that place, bringing the news of the capture of Fort Donelson yesterday, by the land force of the United States, with fifteen thousand prisoners, including Gen. A. Sidney Johnston and Gen. Buckner. Gen. Floyd ran and escaped. The loss on both sides is very heavy.

Applause and laughter greeted the latter part of the dispatch.

Mr. Colfax was surrounded by members to hear further news.

Mr. Washburn (of Ill.): I want the gentleman from Indiana to state that Gen. Ulysses L. Grant, who commanded the land forces that captured the fort, is from Illinois, and from Galena, in my district.

They were in the wildest confusion on the floor and in the galleries, and in view of the gratifying intelligence, motion after motion was made to adjourn, but the House refused; and the joint resolution authorizing the appointment of a stenographer for the committee on the Conduct of the War, was taken up, debated at length and finally adopted.

Mr. Lovejoy called up the bill heretofore introduced by him from the committee on Agriculture, for the establishment of a department of agriculture.

The principal amendment made by the House was in the reduction of the salary of the commissioner, namely, from five to three thousand dollars; the bill was then passed by 152 to 7.

Mr. Blair, from the Military committee, reported the Senate bill making appropriation

for the signal service of the army; which was passed.

Feb'y 18th. In the Senate, Mr. Howe presented the Joint resolutions of the Wisconsin Legislature in favor of the relief of Ireland from famine, referring to her brave sons, who were winning glory for us on our battle fields.

A Joint resolution was received from the House that the Commissioner of Public Buildings be directed to illuminate all public buildings on Saturday the 22d. The resolution was passed.

The case of Starke, of Oregon, was taken up.

Mr. Hale offered a resolution that the case be committed to the Judiciary Committee, with instructions to report on the facts sufficient to show whether he was disloyal or not. A lengthy discussion followed, but no action was taken.

In the House, on the 18th, the Joint resolution tendering the thanks of Congress to Capt. Dupont, and the officers and men under his command, was passed. Also the Senate's resolution of thanks of Congress to the Army and Navy.

The House concurred in the Senate's amendments to the Fortification bill.

Mr. Train introduced the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, The Senate concurring, that the Commissioner of Public Buildings have the public buildings illuminated on the 22d, in honor of the recent victories.

Mr. Washburn introduced the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, As a mark of respect for the memory of the brave men who have been killed, and sympathy for those who have been wounded in the recent victories of our arms in South Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, Missouri and Virginia, as well as a testimonial of the profound admiration of the members of this House, for the persistent and undaunted courage of all the officers and soldiers, sailors and marines, engaged, and who have achieved for themselves, and conferred upon the country, imperishable honor and renown; that this House do now adjourn.

Feb'y 19th. In the Senate, Mr. Rice, from the Military Committee, reported a joint resolution to authorize the Secretary of War to confer the brevet rank of lieutenant-general for eminent services.

Mr. Sumner presented a petition of citizens of New York State, asking that the name of South Carolina be expunged from the list of States, and the territory be divided between North Carolina and Georgia.

On motion of Mr. Harris, the bill in relation to the Circuit and District Courts of the United States was taken up and passed.

Mr. Wilson introduced a joint resolution to authorize the president to present prizes and medals to the enlisted men of the army and navy and marine corps, who may have distinguished themselves in the war, which was adopted.

In the House, on the 19th, Mr. Bennet, delegate from Colorado, offered a resolution, which was adopted, instructing the Committee of the Judiciary, to inquire into the expediency of legalizing all consummated litigation under the Miner's and People's Court in Colorado, prior to the organization of that Territory.

Mr. Hickman offered the following:

Whereas, the Baltimore Clipper, of this date, contains the following publication:

"DOCUMENTS FOUND.—During yesterday the police force visited the office of the South newspaper, and took possession of a number of letters written by Senators Bayard and Saulsbury, of Delaware, and the notorious Vallandigham, of Ohio. The documents contain touching sentiments of poor, bleeding Dixie, and various suggestions how the Yankees might be defeated;" therefore—

Resolved, That the Committee on the Judiciary be directed to inquire into the truth of the allegations therein made against C. L. Vallandigham, a member of this House, with power to send for persons and papers, and to examine witnesses on oath or affirmation, and to make report thereon.

An amusing discussion followed, in which Messrs. Hickman and Vallandigham were the principal orators.

During the discussion, Mr. Hickman asked—Did not the gentleman from Ohio know a rebel camp in Kentucky was called by his name, namely, "Vallandigham?" That did not indicate that the rebels regarded him as the most loyal man in the Union.

Mr. Vallandigham—Is there not a town in Kentucky called "Hickman?" (Laughter.)

Mr. Hickman said I thank God that that town was not called after me, there are a good number of Hickman's, of which I know only one.

Feb. 20th. In the Senate, a joint resolution from the House was received, making an appropriation of one thousand dollars for illuminating the public buildings on Saturday evening the 22d, which was passed.

Mr. Wilkinson offered a resolution for the expulsion of Lazarus W. Powell, Senator from Ky., which was referred to the judiciary committee.

Mr. Fessenden, from the committee on finance, reported back the army appropriation bill. He said there were some large amendments to make by the committee for the deficiency of twenty-six millions, and one in the Ordnance Department for ten millions.

Mr. Sherman called attention to those large appropriations as showing the necessity for passing measures for retrenchment.

Mr. Trumbull asked how many men they were providing for?

Mr. Fessenden said he did not know.

Mr. Trumbull said he thought there was a disposition to over-estimate the number of troops. For instance, it had been reported in the newspapers that there were fifty thousand men attacking Fort Donelson, whereas in fact there were only about twenty-eight thousand men there. He thought this fact should be known for the honor of the gallant men who captured that fort, marching on intrenchments held by nearly their own numbers.

The amendments of the committee were adopted, with the exception of a small item of seventy-six millions for the Quartermaster's Department, which was objected to by the House.

In the House on the 20th, the note bill was called up for consideration and much time was spent in its discussion, some amendments were made, and others proposed and rejected.

Mr. Maynard, from the committee on ways and means, reported a bill establishing a branch mint at Denver City, Colorado Territory.

Mr. Blair reported from the military committee a bill establishing a ship canal from the Mississippi river to Lake Michigan, for the conveyance of military stores and troops.

The Senate's amendments to the army bill were taken up, and in the course of the debate which followed, Mr. Richardson referred to Gen. Grant's proclamation when he entered Paducah: "I have not come to fight opinions, but to resist treason and overwhelm it. I am for sustaining the Constitution and the supremacy of the laws."

He said he wished this proclamation could be written in letters of gold on the sky, that everybody might see the correct doctrine. There never would have been an army of six hundred thousand men raised if the object had been avowed to overthrow the Constitution and create another government. The war never would have been begun but for two elements at the North, namely, the abolition party and the party headed by Buchanan, Toucey, and Cushing, and that class of men. The latter were worse than the abolitionists, because they were smart. Which with other remarks of Mr. Richardson occasioned much laughter.

Feb. 21. In the Senate, Mr. Collamer presented the following:

"That, entertaining the deepest sympathy and condolence with the President in his recent affliction, it is resolved that the Senate do now adjourn." Which was unanimously adopted.

In the House on the 21st, the homestead bill reported from the committee on the public lands coming up, the question pending being to re-commit the same with instructions to report instead the bounty land warrant bill.

Mr. Grow called Mr. Washburn to the Chair, and taking the floor, spoke against the motion.

Mr. Knapp offered a resolution as follows:

"That entertaining the deepest sentiments of condolence with the President and family in their present affliction, in the death of his son, that the House now adjourn."

Mr. Roscoe Conkling offered an amendment, which was adopted:

"That in view of the afflicting event, the Commissioners of Public Buildings be requested to omit the illumination of the public buildings to-morrow night."

The resolution passed as thus amended.

Feb. 24th. In the Senate, the joint resolution in relation to certain railroads in Missouri was taken up. It provides that the Secretary of War pay the St. Joseph and Hannibal and Pacific railroad for transportation, etc., the roads having originally received grants of land, for which it was agreed to transport troops and munitions of war, etc., for the United States.

A lengthy debate followed.

In the House on the 24th, Mr. Roscoe Conkling offered a resolution that the thanks of Congress are due, and are hereby presented to Major-Generals Halleck and Grant, for planning the recent movements within their respective divisions; and to both these generals, as well as to the officers and men under their command, for achieving the glorious victories in which these movements resulted.

The resolution, after considerable debate, was referred.

The House passed the postoffice appropriation bill, and then went into committee of the whole on the Indian appropriation bill.

Mr. Shellabarger made a speech in favor of the emancipation of the slaves.

Feb. 25th. In the Senate. On motion of Mr. Trumbull the bill for the confiscation of the property of rebels was taken up. He said there was pressing necessity; within a few weeks the property of a rebel general in this city had been sold, and the proceeds transmitted to him, while we were sitting here and imposing paper currency on suffering soldiers.

He referred to several cases and decisions of courts justifying the ground taken by the bill, and contended that we have the right to treat rebels as enemies and traitors. Of course we do not intend to hang all men engaged in the rebellion, but the ringleaders and instigators must be brought to the halter. He argued that we have a perfect right to confiscate the property of rebels. It has been settled by the Supreme Court that Congress has the power to pass a confiscation bill.

Government has the right to take persons who may be bound by contract, or take a child even, and draft into the service of the government. The master cannot hold a slave by any stronger tenure.

Mr. Pomeroy objected to the third section, which provides for colonization. He thought we could not afford to send out of the country

the laboring men and producers, and, if insisted upon, he should move to amend by providing colonization for slaveholders, who are dangerous to the country, and whose loss would not be felt.

In the House on the 25th, Mr. Colfax reported a bill authorizing the Postmaster-General to permit additional articles to be sent by mail at present rates of book postage. He said that under the present law roots, cuttings and seeds could be sent by mail at one cent per ounce, but stockings for the soldier, flags and many other things could only go at letter post-rates. The bill was passed unanimously.

Mr. Diven, from the committee on judiciary, reported a bill to establish an additional judiciary districts in the State of New York, to be called the eastern district, which, after considerable debate, was passed.

Mr. Blair, from the military committee, reported a bill establishing an additional article of war for the government of the United States army, prohibiting all officers in the military service from employing any of the forces under their respective commands for the purpose of returning fugitives from service or labor, escaping from those who claim such service or labor to be due to them; and any officer found guilty by court-martial of violating this article shall be dismissed from service.

A lengthy and spirited debate followed, in which Messrs. Blair, Bingham, Mallory, Wickliffe, Grider, Diven, Vallandigham, Wright, Johnson, Crittenden, Steele and Hickman participated.

Several ineffectual motions were made to adjourn by the opponents of the bill, and it finally was passed by a vote of 83 to 42.

February 26th. In the Senate, Mr. Harris presented a petition from a large number of merchants of New York, for a general bankrupt act. Also a memorial of the Academy of Medicine, of New York, against the employment of Homeopathic surgeons.

Mr. McDougall, from the special committee, reported a bill for the establishment of a railroad and telegraph line from the Missouri river to the Pacific ocean.

The bill for the occupation and cultivation of cotton lands was taken up.

Mr. Doolittle thought it a question whether the government should be raising cotton and attempt to run plantations. He thought it would be a very difficult experiment in a pecuniary sense. If there was a proposition to lease out the lands he should not object.

Mr. Wade said that he did not suppose the bill would realize any great sum of money.—But there was a large extent of territory abandoned, and the slaves were left at large, and something must be done to take care of them. This was not a settled policy, but only a temporary measure for one year, to meet the necessities of the case.

Mr. Doolittle thought that if commissioners had been sent down to Port Royal to see the elephant we have on our hands we might have received great information.

Mr. Sumner thought that the nature of the case could not wait for the operations of Congress. If we expect to get any crops at the South the seeds must be immediately planted and sown. It will not do to delay the matter. There was a necessity for immediate action.

Mr. Hale thought there was great force in the remark of the Senator from Massachusetts that the seed time was upon them. He thought that was one of the most prophetic remarks he ever made, in the midst of so many classical quotations. It is a fact that seed time is upon us, and if we do not take advantage of it, we may be obliged to say, "The summer is past and the harvest is ended, and we are not saved." [That is, they will have no cotton.—Ed.]

The bill fixing the number of members of the House of Representatives was taken up.

Mr. Collamer offered an amendment to make the number two hundred and forty-one, which was adopted, and the bill passed by a vote of 21 to 1.

The case of Starke was taken up, and discussed by Messrs. Sumner, McDougall, Howard, Cowan, Wilmer, Carlisle, Wilkinson, Sherman, Trumbull, Dixon, and Harris.

In the House on the 26th, Mr. Voorhies asked leave to offer a resolution tendering the thanks of Congress to Major-General Halleck, commending the sentiments and policy avowed in General Halleck's General Order of Feb. 23, as eminently wise and patriotic, and in strict conformity with the Constitution, and tendering the thanks of Congress to him for said order, and for his military achievements as commander of the department of Missouri.

Mr. Van Wyck offered the following resolution, which was adopted:

Resolved, that the committee on government contracts be directed to inquire into the amount of moneys received by the Federal officers in the city of New York, by virtue of their offices; also, as to the ownership and rents of the bonded warehouses; also the terms, considerations, and profits of the labor contract, and general orders contract, for the storing, hauling, and delivering, &c., of foreign goods in the city of New York; also when the contracts were made, by whom, and who are now interested in the same.

The House then proceeded to the consideration of the Upton election case of the Seventh Congressional District of Virginia.

Mr. Worcester maintained that there is no proper evidence that Mr. Upton, the sitting member, received any votes. Hence the committee on elections report unanimously against him.

Mr. Sedgwick argued that the other mem-