CONGRSSIONAL.

TWENTY FOURTH CONGRESS—2d SESSION

Speech of Mr. Benton,

OF MISSOURI.

In Senate, Monday, Dec. 19, 1836—on the Rescission of the Treasury order.

The following resolutions, introduced by Mr. Ewing, of Ohio, being at their second reading, viz:

"Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives, &c. That the Treasury order of the eleventh day of July, Anno Domini one thousand eight hundred and thirty six, designating the funds which should be receivable in payment for public lands, be and the same is hereby, rescinded.

"Resolved, also, That it shall not be lawful for the Secretary of the Treasury to delegate to any person, or to any corporation, the power of directing what funds shall be receivable for customs, or for public lands; nor shall he make any discrimination in the funds so receivable, between different individuals, or between the different branches of the public revenue."

Mr. BENTON said it was unusual to oppose joint resolutions at their second reading, but he had given notice of his intention to oppose this resolution, not for the purpose of attempting to arrest its course, but to excite attention and discussion, and to lay the foundation for a motion which he intended to make, namely: to send the subject to a committee and to make it the duty of that committee to inquire into the operation and effects of the Treasury order purposed to be rescinded, and into the conduct of the banks which affected to be crippled by it. This motion, and the scope and details of the inquiry, will be brought forward in due time.

In the observations which he should make upon these resolutions, Mr. B. said, he should not confine himself to a reply merely to the remarks of the Senator from Ohio, (Mr. Ewing,) but looking further back, and all around and having due regard to what had proceded this motion, and which was indissolubly connected with it, he should rest the whole subject as it appeared before him, and as it had been exhibited to the public. He had especially in his eye a certain speech, delivered in Kentucky, in September last; & a certain letter written in Philadelphia, in November last.—Passages from each of these would be referred to at proper places; and, paying due attention to these givings-out, and to all the signs which had been visible for some months past in the political zodiac, he could see distinctly that two great objects were proposed to be accomplished by the instrumentality of this joint resolution: first the condemnation of President Jackson for a violation of the laws and constitution and the destruction of the prosperity of the country; and secondly, the overthrow of the Federal constitutional currency, and the imposition of the paper money system of the States upon the Government and people of the Union. In the first of these objects, the present movement is twin brother to the famous resolution of 1833, but without its boldness, for that resolution declared its object upon its face, while this one eschews specification, and insidiously seeks a judgment of condemnation by inference and argument. In the second of these objects, every body will recognise the great design of the second branch of the same famous resolutions of 1833, which, in the restoration of the deposite to the Bank of the United States, clearly went to the establishment of the paper system, and its supremacy over the Federal Government. The present movement therefore, is a second edition of the old one, but a lame and unimportant affair compared to that. Then, we had a magnificent panic; now, nothing but a miserable starveling! For though the letter of the President of the Bank of the United States announced, early in November, that the meeting of Congress was the time for the new distress to become intense, yet, we are two weeks deep in the session, and no distress memorial—no distress deputation—no distress committees, to this hour! Nothing, in fact, in that line, but the distress speech of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. Ewing;) so that the new panic of 1836, has all the signs of being a lean and slender affair—a mere church-mouse concern—a sort of dwarfish, impish imitation of the gigantic spectre which stalked through the land in 1833.

The joint resolution of 1816.

"That the Secretary of the Treasury be, and he hereby is, required and directed to adopt such measures as he may deem necessary, to cause, as soon as may be, all duties, taxes, debts, or sums of money, accruing or becoming payable to the United States, to be collected and paid in the States or Treasury notes of the Bank of the United States, as by law provided and declared, or in notes of banks which are payable on demand, in the said legal currency of the United States; and that, from and after the 20th day of February next, no such duties, taxes, debts or sums of money, accruing or becoming payable to the United States, as aforesaid, ought to be collected or received otherwise than in the legal currency of the United States, or Treasury notes, or notes of the Bank of the United States, or in the said legal currency of the United States."

This is the law, continued Mr. B. and nothing can be plainer than the right of selection which it gives to the Secretary of the Treasury. Four different *media* are mentioned in which the revenue may be collected, and the Secretary is made the actor, the agent, and the power, to which the collection is to be effected. He is to do it in one, or in another. He may choose several, or all, or two, or one. All are in the disjunctive. No two are joined together, but all are disjoined, and presented to him individually and separately. It is clearly the right of the Secretary to order the collections to be made in either of the four *media* mentioned. That the resolution is not mandatory, in favor of one of the four, is obvious from the manner in which the notes of the Bank of the United States are mentioned. They were to be received as *then* provided for by law; for the bank charter had been just passed; and the 14th section had provided for the reception of the notes of this institution until Congress, by law, should direct otherwise. The right of the institution to deliver its notes in payment of the revenue, was anterior to this resolution, and always held under that 14th section, never under this joint resolution: and when that section was repealed at the last session of this Congress, that right was admitted to be gone, and has never been claimed since.

The words of the law are clear; the practice under it has been uniform and uninterrupted from the date of its passage to the present day. For twenty years, and under three Presidents, all the Secretaries of the Treasury have acted alike. Each has made selections, permitting the notes of some specie paying banks to be received, forbidding others. Mr. Crawford did it in numerous instances; and fierce and universal as were the attacks upon that eminent patriot during the Presidential canvass of 1824, no human being ever thought of charging him with illegality in this respect. Mr. Rush twice made similar selections during the administration of Mr. Adams; and no one, either in the same cabinet with him, or out of the cabinet against him, ever complained of it. For twenty years the practice has been uniform; and every citizen of the west knows that that practice was the general, though not universal exclusion of the western specie paying bank paper from the western land offices. This every man in the west knows, that that general exclusion continued down to the day that the Bank of the United States ceased to be the depository of the public moneys. It was that event which opened the door to the receivability of State bank paper, which has since been enjoyed.

Surely we have accumulated proof enough upon this point; surely there is no necessity for any thing to refute this charge, and to establish the legality of this Treasury order. But other proof is at hand, though unnecessary, it shall be used. High as is the authority of the report of the committee of 1824, and close as it is to the point, there is yet higher authority, and still closer to the point, yet to be adduced; for it is the authority of the same author of the resolution, and that before the question was raised; and while the resolution was on its passage; and in which he not only understood them as shown afterwards in the report of the committee of which he was a member, but in which he went farther, and expressed his fear that the whole good effect of the resolution might be lost, if the TREASURY DEPARTMENT should not execute it precisely as that Department, under the splendid and beneficent administration of President Jackson has done!

Extracts from Mr. Webster's speech in the House of Representatives, April 26, 1816, on the resolution offered by him for the more effectual collection of the revenue in lawful money of the country.

"Mr. W. said, that he felt it to be his duty to call the attention of the House once more to the subject of the collection of the revenue, and to present the resolutions which he had submitted. He had been the more inclined to do this from an apprehension that the rejection, yesterday, of the bill which had been introduced, might be construed into an abandonment, on the part of the House, of all hope of remedying the existing evil. He had had, it was true, some objections against proceeding by way of bill; because the case was not one in which the law was deficient but one in which the execution of the law was deficient * * * * The situation of the country, (said Mr. W.) in regard to the collection of its revenues, is most deplorable. With a perfectly sound legal currency, the national revenues are not collected in this currency, but in paper of various sorts, and various degrees of value.

* * * * It is quite clear, that by the statute all duties and taxes are required to be paid in the legal money of the United States, or in Treasury notes, agreeably to a recent provision. It is just as clear that the law has been disregarded, and that the notes of banks of a hundred different descriptions, and almost as many different values, have been received, and are still received, where the statue requires legal money or Treasury notes to be paid. * * * * There are some political evils which are seen as soon as they are dangerous, and which alarm at once as well the people as the Government. Wars and invasions, therefore, are not always the most certain destroyers of national prosperity. They come in no questionable shape. They announce their own approach, and the general safety is preserved by the general alarm. Not so with the evils of a debased coin, a depreciated paper currency, or a depressed and failing public credit. Not so with the plausible and insidious mischief of a paper money system. These insinuate themselves in the shape of facilities, accommodation and relief. They hold out the most fallacious hope of an easier payment of debts, and a lighter burden of taxation. It is easy for a portion to imagine that Government may properly continue to receive depreciated paper, because they have received it, and because it is more convenient to obtain it than to obtain other paper, or specie. But on these subjects it is, that Government ought to exercise its own peculiar wisdom and caution. It is supposed to possess, on subjects of this nature, somewhat more of foresight than has fallen to the lot of individuals. It is bound to foresee the evil before every man feels it, and to take all necessary measures to guard against it, although they may be measures attended with some difficulty, and not without some temporary inconvenience. * * * * * * The only power which the Government possesses of restraining the issues of the State banks, is to refuse their notes in the receipts of the Treasury. This power it can exercise now, or at least can provide now for exercising it in reasonable time, because the currency of some part of the country is yet sound, and the evil is not yet universal * * * But I have expressed my belief on more than one occasion, and I now repeat the opinion, that it is the duty of the Secretary of the Treasury, on the return of peace, to have returned to the legal and proper mode of collecting the revenue. * * * * It can hardly be doubted that the influence of the Treasury could have effected all this. If not, it could have withdrawn the deposites, and the countenance of Government, from institutions which against all rule and all propriety, were holding great sums in Government stocks, and making erroneous profits from the circulation of their own dishonored paper. That which was most wanted was the designation of a time for the corresponding operation of banks of different places. This could have been made by the head of the Treasury better than by any body, or every body else. * * * * This Government has a right, in all cases, to protect its own revenues, and to guard them against defalcation or bad and depreciated paper. It is bound also, to collect the taxes of the people on a uniform system. * * * * As to the opinion advanced by some that the object of the resolution cannot, in any way, be answered—that the revenue cannot be collected otherwise than they are now, in the paper of any and every banking association which chooses to issue paper, it cannot for a moment be admitted. * * * * The thing, therefore, is to be done; at any rate it is to be attempted. That it will be accomplished by the Treasury Department, without the interference of Congress, I have no belief. If from that source no reformation came when reformation was easy, it is not now to be expected. Especially after the vote of yesterday, those whose interest it is to continue the present state of things will arm themselves with the authority of Congress. They will justify themselves by the decision of this House They will say, and say truly that this House having taken up the subject and discussed it, has not thought fit so much as to declare that it is expedient even to relieve the country or its revenues from a paper money system. * * * But while some gentlemen oppose these resolutions, because they fix a time too near, others think they fix a day too distant. In my own judgment, it is not so material what the time is, as it is to fix a time The great object is, that our legal currency is to be preserved, and that we are not to embark on the ocean of paper money. * * * I cannot say, indeed, that this resolution will certainly produce the desired end. I may fail. Its success, as is obvious, must essentially depend on the course pursued by the Treasury Department.

Having disposed of the charge of illegality, Mr. B. took up that of the unconstitutionality of the Treasury order. He read from the published speech of the Senator from Ohio, (Mr. Ewing,) as found in a revised form in the National Intelligencer, the specific allegation of this alleged unconstitutionality which ran thus:

"There is a provision in the constitution directly in the face of this order. Those who drew up the order seemed to have been aware of it, and to have avoided employing the same words as used in the article of the constitution. But it is not, therefore, any the less in violation of its provisions. The constitution declares that the citizens of each of the United States shall enjoy all the privileges and immunities of the citizens of the several States; even the States themselves cannot discriminate. But this order gives to the citizens of one State a privilege which the citizens of no other State are allowed to enjoy, that of paying for public land in the ordinary currency of the country. With some this arrangement will have but little effect, especially as it is directed against an Executive act; but it is not, therefore, the less sound."

Mr. B. said there was an error in the quotation in this place, and not only in the quotation, but in the gentleman's head also. The constitution was erroneously quoted by the gentleman, and that error had pervaded his argument; and if followed out to its legitimate conclusions, would present a picture of the rarest absurdities and impossibilities. The quotation says, "the citizens of each State of the United States shall enjoy all the privileges and immunities of the citizens of the several States." The constitution said, "all the privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States." The error of the quotation was in using the definite article *the*, and the proposition *of*, and this error unhinged the meaning of the clause, and conducted the argument off on a track which would lead into boundless confusion. The clause as it stands in the constitution is general and indefinite, clearly meaning that the States were to treat each other's citizens as members of the same General Government, and not as aliens. The quotation, and the argument upon it, gives individuality and particularity to this general right; and by giving to the citizens of each State the rights of the citizens of all the other States, abolishes at a blow all State lines, and makes one consolidated government of the whole Union. Thus, by this reading, whatever any citizen can do in his own State, every citizen of every State in the Union, may come there and do also; vote with him; hold offices with him, exercise licensed trades and professions with him; contend with him for the honors and emoluments of the State, without owing it allegiance, or paying it a tax, or residing within its limits. What scenes this would give rise to! What crusading visits, or visitations, at the successive elections! Whole States would precipitate themselves in masses upon their neighbors! Some zealous partisans, by aid of steam cars, and race horses, and flying chariots, might succeed in voting in every State in the Union! Suppose the gentleman was right, and his grand secret had been found out before the late Presidential election; what a moving flood of living heads we should have seen! such as have never been beheld since Xerxes crossed the Hellespont; or Peter the Hermit led his countless host to the Holy Lands! But it will not do. The definite article *the*, and the proposition *of*, which figure in the gentleman's quotation, and rule his argument, are not in the constitution, and so, the citizens of every state are not to enjoy the rights and immunities of the citizens of every other State. Little Delaware is not to give two millions of votes at the next Presidential election! Pursuing this error, the gentleman says, the States themselves, cannot discriminate between the rights of their own citizens, and those of other States. But we all know that they can, and that they do, discriminate. Every election proves it; every tenure of office proves it; many trades and professions prove it; the requiring, or despensing with bail proves it; the whole distinction between the foreign and domestic attachment is founded upon this discrimination. Truly, the gentleman must choose between his pride and his patriotism, between his speech and his country,—for his error must be fatal to his argument, or fatal to the States.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

MONDAY, JANUARY 9, 1837.

ABOLITION OF SLAVERY.

The States were called for Petitions.

Mr. ADAMS rose and said—I have a petition from 150 women, the wives and daughters of my constituents, praying the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia.

Mr. GLASCOCK—I object to the reception of the petition.

An inquiry was made of the Chair whether the question was debateable.

The SPEAKER decided that it was.

Mr. ADAMS hoped, he said, that the principle of non reception, subversive as it was of constitutional rights of his constituents, would not be countenanced by the House. The petition might be rejected, and the House, he believed, were but too ready and eager to reject the prayer of such petitions. He complained that the petitions were not only rejected, but that the petitioners were treated with obloquy contempt. The humanity & benevolence of the motives which prompted this memorial ought alone to commend it to the respect and attention of the House. What had the House to fear from those females? Blood, insurrection, and murder? No sir, there is nothing, said Mr. A. of an inflammatory character in the paper. I hope the objection will be withdrawn. I appeal to the gentleman, himself a son and a father, to withdraw it, from considerations of respect for those mothers and daughters. The memorial is very brief, and I trust it will be received and read.

Mr. GLASCOCK said, in reply, that though the petitioners were females, he found that they acted on this subject under a very improper influence. No petition of the kind was sent here without an object. They were all got up and sent here in pursuance of a general system of agitation. No man had more consideration than he had for the motives which the gentleman supposed to actuate the memorialists; but were he a son of any one of the petitioners he would implore her at least to withheld the expression of feeling and opinion which, however sincere, he would assure her were fraught with mischief to the public welfare. Moreover, acting as the representative of Southern mothers, he objected to the reception of a memorial which, however intended, would have the effect to fill their minds with apprehension and alarm. He was aware that a majority of the House were opposed to this motion, and that it would not be sustained; but, he should persist in it for the purpose of recording his own vote in its support.

Mr. PARKS said that no good could result from the discussion of this subject. He moved, therefore, to lay the question of reception on the table.

Mr. REED called for the yeas nays on the question, and they were ordered.

The question being taken, it was decided in the affirmative, yeas 130, nays 69.

The memorial therefore lies over till next Monday.

Mr. ADAMS again rose and presented the memorial of two hundred and twenty-eight females, residents of South Weymouth, praying the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia.

Mr. Adams proceeded to read the petition.

Several members called Mr. Adams to order. Mr. CHAMBERS of Ky. made a point of order: was not the member under the 45th rule of the House, confined to "a brief statement of the contents of a memorial.

The CHAIR decided that Mr. ADAMS could not read the memorial, and must confine himself to "a brief statement of its contents."

Mr. ADAMS appealed from the decision of the Chair. He called upon the Speaker to say whether he decided that a member was not in order in reading *any* thing that he pleased, as a part of his speech. If it was intended to suppress the liberty of speech and the right of discussion in this House, so help him God, he would resist it in his own person.

The CHAIR read from the Manual of Mr. Jefferson, and other authorities, passages which stated that a member had no right to read any paper, printed or written, (not even his own written speech) without the consent of the House. But, independently of that consideration, the gentleman's attempt to read the petition was an evasion of the 45th rule, which confines a member to a brief statement of the contents "of a petition," when he presents it.

Some discussion took place on the question of order, in which the decision of the Chair was sustained by Messrs. Patton, Briggs and Chambers, of Ky. and opposed by Messrs. Harper, of Pa. and Adams.

Mr. ADAMS said he would compromise the matter. He would withdraw the appeal, if the House would suffer him to complete his "brief statement" of the contents of the memorial. There were but two more lines of it, and those he wished the House to hear.

He proceeded to read the "two lines;" wherein the memorialists express their determination to present the same memorial every year until its prayer shall be complied with.

Tremendous cries of "order" accompanied and followed Mr. A's remarks.

The SPEAKER peremptorily ordered Mr. A. to take his seat.

Mr. ADAMS, instead of complying, raised his voice, and continued his remarks, which were however entirely inaudible, in consequence of the loud cries of "order," "order," from every part of the House.

The SPEAKER again directed the gentleman to sit down. Mr. ADAMS, having brought his "brief statement" to a conclusion, took his seat, at the same time saying, "I withdraw the appeal."

Mr. GLASCOCK objected to the reception of the petition presented by the gentleman from Massachusetts, and proceeded to make some remarks, in the course of which he was interrupted by many calls to order.

Mr. DAWSON, of Ga, attempted to address the House on the subject. His remarks appeared to be deprecatory of any excitement on the question; but, owing to the increasing confusion he was not distinctly heard.

Mr. MANN, of N. Y. moved the previous question, which was ordered to be put. The main question, "shall the petition be received?" was put and decided in the affirmative, yeas, 137, nays, 75. So the petition was received.

Mr. HAYNES moved to lay the petition on the table, which motion was agreed to, yeas 151, nays 50.

Mr. ADAMS presented another similar petition, to the reception of which Mr. HALSEY objected.

At this point, (3 o'clock) this despatch was closed. Mr UNDERWOOD speaking on the question of reception.

CONGRESS—TEXAS.

In Senate on the 11th inst. Mr. Walker offered the following resolution:

Resolved, That the State of Texas having established and maintained an independent government capable of performing those duties, foreign and domestic, which appertain to independent governments; and it appearing that there is no longer any reasonable prospect of the successful prosecution of the war with Mexico against said State, it is expedient and proper, and in conformity with the laws of nations, and the practice of this government in like cases, that the independent political existence of said State, shall be acknowledged by the government of the United States,

Mr. WALKER did not ask the consideration of this resolution now, but would merely express his belief that it was in perfect concurrence with the opinions of the President.

The executive had said that our course should depend on the result of the new expedition which was making against Texas.—Now (said Mr. W.) I have this morning received information that the Mexican army which was advancing against Texas has been broken up, and that the few who remain have neither arms nor provisions—the Commanding General had sent in his resignation, and the danger had passed away. Therefore he believed there could be no objection to the resolution.

[From the Pennsylvanian.]

THE VICE PRESIDENCY—COLONEL R. M. JOHNSON.

We copy in another column from the N. Y. Evening Star, an article in reference to the Vice Presidency, and Richard M. Johnson and Francis Granger. The Star, in depreciating on party grounds, the election of Mr. Granger to the Vice Presidency, should the question come before the Senate, has the merit of consistency. If one of the reasons among its friends for opposing Martin Van Buren, was, that he came from the powerful State of New York, surely the objection acts with tenfold force against Mr. Granger, now that Mr Van Buren's election is secure. If it was an objection that our candidate for the Presidency was a New Yorker, it is strange enough that the objectors should desire that both President and Vice President should come from the State so hated by whiggery.—But We believe that even before the Senate, the chances in favor of Mr. Granger amount to very little, and we are not without hopes that by the aid of a few electoral votes from Virginia, the election of Colonel Johnson has been effected by the Colleges, it being generally supposed that the electors from Western Virginia, as well as their constituents, are in his favor.

But be that as it may, the article from the Star is important in another respect. It contains a refutation of the slanders against Col. Johnson, which, so vehemently insisted on, and so frequently repeated, were perhaps not without their effect during the campaign. It is certainly rather tardy justice on the part of our Whiggish cotemporary; but still, justice to the candidates of the Democratic party at the hands of their opponents, is so rare, that the article to which we allude is worthy of being placed on record. As it comes from one who did his utmost to defeat the nominees of the National Convention, it carries the stamp of sincerity, and will do much to disabuse the public mind at home, and we trust, abroad. There is a point at which party rancor should stop. Something is due to the character of the nation, and surely the most heated partizans will acknowledge that when their inventions can no longer be used with effect, it is time to lay them aside, and accord at least partial justice to their adversaries.

(From the N. York Evening Star)

THE VICE PRESIDENCY.—The Richmond Enquirer will not permit the Virginia Electors to vote for Colonel Johnson as Vice President, on the ground that they are pledged to vote for a Mr. Smith, whose location is not exactly or definitely known, and a few votes only from the Virginia election may decide the question in the colleges. Several of the Whig Southern papers prefer Mr. Tyler to Johnson, and are willing to give up Granger to bring in a Virginia Vice President. Several at the North are in hopes that Mr Granger will be elected. Now, as it is certain, we apprehended, that Mr. Van Buren is elected, we are desirous that he should carry in with him the candidate he originally consented to be run with. It is decidedly against the interests of the country and the success of the Whig party, that our future struggles for public good should be neutralized, by holding the second office, and that a mere nominal one All or nothing. If a battle is to be fought we must have none of our men in the enemy's camp.

With the best wishes towards Mr Granger and a perfect confidence in his integrity and capacity, and ardent desire to see him elected by the people, his success in the Senate would only double the existing jealousy towards New York. It was impolitic to take the Chief Magistrate of the Union from the powerful State; but what would be our situation if President, Vice President, and part of the Cabinet were selected from the State? The just rights of the State would be always contested, her admitted claims would be denied, until jealousy suspicion and distrust would be every where fostered, and charges of New York ambition, New York avarice and monopoly would make us every where odious. Besides, it is despicable in any of the friends of Mr. Van Buren, now that he is elected, endeavoring to cheat his associate and trick him out of the office. They have been nominated together, have run together, like two figs in a jar.

But something is due on the score of strict justice to Colonel Johnson—something from old attachments, now that the election is over. He has been severely assailed by many of his own political friends, and an attempt is made to defeat his election, on the ground that he is the husband of a colored woman, and as such unfit to be the Vice President of the United States. Now, in order that foreign nations might not credit a charge certainly not very reputable in any country, it is just and proper to say, Colonel Johnson was never married to any colored person; that he is not living with any colored person; nor is his character, as a moral, just, and liberal man, impugned by this charge; although we, amongst others, did certainly deal in some jibes and jeers, and "ambiguous givings-out" on this point. The facts, as stated to us by one who knows, are simply these: Col. Johnson, while a very young man, formed an attachment to a handsome mustee girl, belonging to the estate of his father, who was subsequently made free. He had two daughters—bearing no traces of this admixture of blood, who were educated in the District of Columbia, among the ladies of the first families—and when of age married to gentlemen of character in the West, receiving fortunes from their father. Their mother, represented to be a pious woman, of whom the daughters knew but little, is dead.

How does this tally with the charge, that Col. Johnson was about to bring a black wife and yellow girls to Washington, and that the President was bound to introduce them in his own family, and the families of his cabinet.—Even Southern prejudices, strong as they may be against amalgamation, can find, we think, no cause of complaint on this point. We have known Col. Johnson for many years—know him as a kind hearted man, and courteous to all—not a great man, it is true, but we believe an honest and patriotic man. We say thus much who did not support him. Why then should his own political friends desert him, or Virginia instruct the Van Buren Electors not to vote for him, when he was also the nominee of the Baltimore Convention; or why should the Whigs agree not to cast their vote for Mr. Granger, but give it to Mr. Tyler, because Virginia has prejudices against Col. Johnson? How much does the country owe Virginia for her late vote! *Nous verrons.*

From the Troy Budget

DREADFUL CALAMITY,—SEVERAL LIVES LOST.

Early last summer, many of our readers are aware, a large mass of clay burst from the hill on the east section of the first ward in this city followed by a gushing stream of water, and doing no other injury than covering a large portion of ground, at the bowels of the hill. Last evening, about seven o'clock, a similar occurrence took place on the same spot, but we regret to say, greater in extent and exceedingly fatal in its consequences. An avalanche of clay came tumbling from an eminence of nearly 500 feet, moving down the base of the hill to level land, and then continued from the impulse it received, to the distance of about 800 feet covering up acres of ground, accompanied with a cataract of water and sand which kept up a terrible roar. The mass moved along with great rapidity, carrying with it two stables and three dwelling houses, and crushing them and their contents in thousands of pieces. The stables and houses were moved to a distance of 200 feet, into a hollow on the corner of Washington and Fourth streets

In its way, the avalanche also encountered a brick kiln, burying it partially over and crumbling it together from which a few minutes after, the flames rushed forth and lit up the city as with great conflagration. This signal was the first intimation that was had of the catastrophe, to those not in the immediate vicinity.

The three dwelling houses destroyed were of light structure, and one occupied by Mr. John Grace, another by Mrs. Leavensworth, and the third by Mrs. Warner, the last of which was fortunately vacant at the time of the calamity. In Graces' house were himself and wife and little boy. The two former were extricaton from the ruins dead, and the boy was taken out alive, very little hurt, bare footed and bare headed, the buildings have been shattered in a thousand pieces, which is one of the most singular escapes that ever came to our knowledge. There were four of Mrs Leavenworth's family in her house—herself and three children. Two of the children were in bed at the time and probably asleep, and were afterwards taken from the midst of the wreck dead, crushed almost to a jelly, and were undoubtedly thrown instantly from a natural sleep into a sleep of death. Mrs. Leavensworth was taken out shockingly bruised; and was barely alive when we last heard from her. Fortunately three of the family were at church at the time and escaped awful deaths.

The stables were owned by Mr. Bingham, in which were 22 horses, and all carried along with the mass together, with nine or ten dirt carts. Six horses were taken from the ruins alive—the other sixteen were killed. The dead bodies of the horses can this morning be seen mingled among the ruins. Mr. Bingham's loss must be considerable.

We learn that the body of a person was found, name unknown, who was probably employed in the brick kiln or stables—which makes in all FIVE DEAD BODIES taken from the ruins last night. There are probably others buried among the ruins, and it is likely some persons at the time were in the stables or brick kiln.

A correspondent of the Patriot furnishes the following, in reference to the seat of the above disaster:

As many of your readers are not acquainted with the peculiar situation of the city of Troy, I will describe it: The city is built upon what is called here A RIVER BOTTOM. It is, however, somewhat of the nature of table land, and is generally from 15 to 20 feet above the bed of the river. This bottom of table is, in the widest part, about three-eights of a mile wide, and is bordered on the east by an abrupt hill in some places between three and four hundred feet high. This hill is so very steep that it is with great difficulty it can be climed by even boys except in zig-zag courses.—When I was in Troy last summer, the city was compactly built from the river to the hill; except in the exact place where the catastrophe occurred—there were but few houses.—When in Troy I learned that a steam of water had then gushed out of the side of the hill at the very place of the late catastrophe. It was the opinion of many, that there was an extensive subterranean body of water confined in this hill; or at least an underground communication with some of the large bodies of water in the mountainous regions north and east of the city. The same range of hills, or rather, the same hill runs for many miles north and south of Troy, interrupted by occasional gaps for creeks, &c. The old army barracks at Greenbush, opposite Albany, are situated on it. Had the SLIDE taken place a quarter of a mile north of its present site, it would have buried the very heart of the city.

SEWING MACHINE.

The Monroe Democrat, published at Rochester, New York, recently contained an account of a Sewing Machine, invented by a mechanic of that place, from which we make the following extract.

We were yesterday permitted to witness the operation of a very simple machine, which has been constructed, within a few months, in this city, and which demonstrates the fact that tailoring will not always be done by finger, and thimbles. In its preseat imperfect state, it takes from three to four stitches in a second and the inventor thinks one may be constructed with improvements which have suggested themselves to his mind, which will more than double this number.

JUMPING.

The first rule in jumping is, to fall on the toes and never on the heels.—Bend the knees, that the calves of the legs may touch the thighs. Swing the arms forward when taking a spring, break the fall with the hands, if necessary; hold the breath, keep the body forward, come to the ground with both feet together, and in taking the run, let your steps be short, and increase in quickness as you approach the leap. Begin with a moderate height or breadth, and increase both as you improve.

PARODY.

The most amusing one of the day was made recently by the Portland Times, upon a single line:

"Long aches from little toe corns grow."

LONG LEASE.

We remember seeing a bill in a shop window, a few years ago, which ran thus: "These premises to let—on a lease—115 feet in length."

CAUSES FOR MARRIAGE.

One man marries a woman because she looks well when she dances—she never dances afterwards. Another man marries because the lady has a handsome foot and ancle, which admire. A third marries for love, which wanes with the honey moon. A fourth marries for money, and finds that his wife does not choose to die, to complete his satisfaction. And a fifth, being old in wisdom as in years, marries a young woman, who soon becomes a suitable match for him, by growing old with grief.

An unfeeling Father.—Just as the steamboat was leaving the dock at New Haven, a well dressed man, and apparently a gentleman, was set down by a coachman with a child in his arms. The child was handed to the chambermaid with a request that she would take charge of it for a moment, and the person disappeared and has not since been heard from. The child was a boy about a year old, well dressed and perfectly quiet and contented. The ladies took charge of it on the passage down, and the Captain on his arrival here was under the necessity of handing the little innocent over to the Commissioners of the Alms House

LATEST FROM FLORIDA.

The following is the latest intelligence we have from Florida.

Extract of a letter from an officer of the army, dated Garey's Ferry, Dec. 28.

"An express arrived here last night from the Army, Gen. Jessup had gone with his original force and the Tennesseans, to Tampa, where the latter will be discharged, leaving our battalion of Regulars and the Friendly Indians at Dade's massacre ground, constructing a depot. He is to return thither, whence he is to commence excursions South. The trails of the breaking up of the Wahoo Swamp, (which it seems was made too hot for them,) all wended South.

"Brevt. Maj. Childs leaves here in a few days for Fort Drane with 120 infantry recruits and the friendly Indians who have resuscitated here. The Dragoons and Captain Mellan's company are daily expected here from Old Point."

An expedition under command of Col. Sancez consisting of portion of Captain Hanson's, Curry's and Freymuth' mounted companies, and a number of volunteers, have marched for the south. They will proceed to Tomoka, and probably to Mosquito. They will be absent several days.

This is the first movement that has been made towards that quarter since April last. No white man has been at that place since the South Carolina Militia left it.

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