

Correspondence of the Charleston Mercury.  
Thirty-First Congress—2d Session.

WASHINGTON, JAN. 11.

In the Senate, among the petitions presented, were several by Mr. Cooper from citizens of Pennsylvania, asking the repeal of the Fugitive Slave Law. After some observations on the Compromise Acts, so called, of last session, he said the prayer of the petitioners was not to be taken as an indication of the opinion of the mass of the people of Pennsylvania on the subject; for he knew that the people of that State, as a body, meant to abide by the Fugitive Slave Law in its spirit. The memorialists were then, without debate, referred to the Judiciary Committee. He then presented two petitions against the extension of slavery, and for its abolition in the District of Columbia, both of which were immediately laid on the table, there being no disposition to debate them. This, so far as it goes, is well, for it shows that there is no disposition to create any more fanatical capital at the present session.

Mr. Underwood moved to take up the joint resolution of the House making the land warrants under the Act of September 28, 1850, assignable.

Mr. Walker opposed the motion, and argued against the making of these warrants assignable. He contended that in such a case the benefit of the act would go to brokers and speculators instead of to the soldiers.

After some discussion, the motion of Mr. Underwood was lost by a vote of ayes, 17, noes 25.

The Senate then took up the bill to cede to the several States the public lands lying therein, respectively, on condition that the said States shall severally grant the said lands to actual occupants only, in limited quantities.

Mr. Welch took the floor and spoke until the adjournment, in opposition to the bill.

The next bill in order is the French Spoliation bill, which Mr. Smith says he is determined to push through at the earliest possible moment.

In the House, a resolution was adopted by a large majority, giving Mr. Asa Whitney the use of the Hall for the purpose of explaining his project of a railway to the Pacific. It is establishing a bad precedent, for hereafter the House cannot consistently refuse other applications.

The resolution of Mr. Chandler directing the Committee on Commerce to report on the expediency of reducing the value of our silver coins so as to prevent their exportation, was taken up and adopted.

Mr. Linnaham moved a suspension of the rules to enable him to introduce a resolution declaring it to be inexpedient and improper to repeal the Fugitive Slave Law.

After a good deal of disorder and confusion, the question on suspending the rules was not decided in the negative—Yeas 123, Nays 84, not two thirds.

The bill to reduce the rates of postage was next considered, and Mr. Potter, the Chairman of the Committee which reported it made the closing speech. The House then, without further action on the bill, adjourned.

From a statement made this morning by the Commissioner of Pensions, it appears that over 40,000 claims for bounty land are already on hand, and that more are arriving at the rate of about a thousand per day.

Mr. Butterfield, the Commissioner of the Land Office, is not to be removed, the numerous reports to the contrary notwithstanding.

General Heppner and son, of Chili, and Count Lasterie, of France, are among the distasteful strangers in the city.

The French Minister was surprised to find his early departure announced in nearly all the papers. He says he has heard nothing from France on the subject of his recall. Thus Error flies round the earth while Truth is putting on her sandals.

By an official letter this morning, it appears the St. Lawrence will be in readiness to sail for the World's Fair on the first of next month.

Spring, the free negro who recently in open day attacked with a knife and robbed a respectable citizen, was yesterday tried, and found guilty of an assault with intent to murder. He will go to the Penitentiary for at least ten years.

Reported for the Baltimore Sun.

WASHINGTON, JAN. 15, 1851.

SENATE—Mr. Clay presented three petitions from citizens of Indiana, praying Congressional aid in the colonization of free negroes.

He also presented a memorial, numerously and most respectfully signed by citizens of Rhode Island, praying the establishment of a line of steamers or of sailing-packets between the United States and the coast of Africa.

It alluded to the slave trade, and to the failure to suppress it effectually by means of the joint squadrons of Great Britain, France and the United States, on the coast of Africa. He pointed out the immense extent of the slave trade carried on in Brazil, and to the fact that the trade was carried on chiefly in American vessels. The vessels were sold in Brazil to be delivered on the coast of Africa, and by these means the slavers succeeded in getting to Africa under the American flag. Sailors were then either obliged to navigate slavers home, or perch on the coast of Africa. For this he recommended as a remedy that no sea letter or authority be given to any vessel to trade between such ports and the coast of Africa.

He argued the squadron on the coast of Africa, was a great expense, and the lives and health of seamen were exposed, and very little good resulted. He contended the true and only effectual remedy for the suppression of the slave trade was to colonize the whole coast of Africa, and thus cut the trade off at its threshold. He depicted the deplorable condition which free negroes would ever experience in this country, and pointed to the shores of Africa as the only place where they could ever expect to enjoy a contented or happy existence.

The petitions were then referred to the committee on commerce.

Mr. Hale presented a petition from Montgomery county, Pennsylvania, praying the immediate repeal of the Fugitive Slave Law. He said that, after the example of others, he would comment on the petition. He pronounced the Fugitive Slave Law a reproach to the age of

civilization, and a perfect parody on the Constitution.

Mr. Foote called to order. It was not in order thus to speak of the legislation of Congress.

Mr. Rusk said, if speeches were allowed on petitions, nothing could be done in the morning hour.

The Chair decided that the Senator from New Hampshire was in order.

Mr. Foote asked if the Chair decided that the Senator was out of order.

The Chair replied in the Negative.

Mr. Foote said the Senator then was at liberty to denounce the legislation of Congress as long as he pleased.

Mr. Hale said he would not go half as far as the Senator from Mississippi did at last session upon the legislation of Congress in regard to the public printer. He then proceeded to reply to some remarks of Mr. Clay, which he was again called to order, and the Chair sustained the point of order.

Mr. Whitecomb moved to lay the petition on the table.

The yeas and nays were taken—before the vote was announced, Mr. Foote called attention of the Chair to the fact that several Senators were present who had not voted.

Mr. Yulee said he had not voted, and had a reason for not doing so.

Mr. Foote insisted on the bill being engrossed.

Mr. Yulee, after much confusion, &c., obtained leave to state as his reason for not voting, that there were resolutions pending before the Legislature of Florida, instructing their Senators not to vote on any question relating to the Fugitive Slave Law.

Mr. Foote still insisted on the bill.

Mr. Yulee asked to be excused from voting.

Mr. Mangum asked for yeas and nays on excusing Mr. Yulee.

Mr. Hale asked to be excused from voting on the motion to excuse the Senator from Florida. The present law was that all should vote, and he did not know whether to vote for the enforcement of the law or wait for the "higher law" from Florida.

Mr. Seward said he would vote for any one who did not desire to vote.

Mr. Foote was surprised at the harmony between Senators from Florida, and New York on the general doctrine of higher law.

Mr. Berrien said the reason was not satisfactory.

After further debate,

The Chair decided that it was not in order at the time to ask to be excused. Every one should vote. He directed the Secretary to call the Senator from Florida. The Secretary called the name of Mr. Yulee, but that gentleman did not respond.

Mr. Winthrop said that in the House the practice had been to call a member, and if he refused to vote it was a case for censure, to be acted on after the vote was over.

Mr. Butler said he was in the same position as the Senator from Florida, he had not voted nor did he intend to vote.

The vote was then announced, as follows:

Yeas—Messrs. Atchison, Bell, Berrien, Bradbury, Cass, Clay, Clemens, Davis, of Iowa, Dawson, Dickinson, Dodge, of Iowa, Douglas, Downs, Felch, Foote, Gwin, Houston, Hunter, Jones, King, Mangum, Mason, Morton, Norris, Pearce, Phelps, Rhett, Rusk, Shields, Soale, Spruance, Underwood, Wales, Whitcomb—35.

Nays—Messrs. Baldwin, Benton, Chase, Cooper, Davis, of Mass., Dayton, Dodge, of Wis., Ewing, Hale, Hamlin, Miller, Seward, Smith, Upham, Walker, Winthrop—18.

So the petition was laid on the table.

Mr. Pearce presented the memorial of Mr. Blackstone and others, members of the Constitutional Convention of Maryland, praying that a contract may be entered into by the Government with Wm. B. Clarke for the transportation of the mail from Baltimore and Norfolk by steamers to some port in England.

After the petitions and reports, the Senate took up the bill to cede the public lands to the States in which they lie, on certain conditions, &c.

Mr. Walker concluded his remarks in support of the bill, after which the bill was postponed, and the Senate then went into executive session and shortly after adjourned.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—The amendment proposed yesterday, for the committee rising, that the postage on all paid letters should be one cent, on all unpaid letters, of less than half an ounce, five cents; and that no mail route or compensation to postmasters be discontinued in consequence of the passing of the act, again came up, and was decided in the negative.

Mr. Brown, from Indiana, moved that the postage on a letter carried a distance less than 300 miles be three cents, and on all letters beyond that distance, in both cases weighing less than half an ounce, five cents, and the same for every additional half ounce; on all drop letters two cents; and which was negatived, 73 to 52.

It was then proposed as an amendment that the postage under 300 miles should be three cents; over 500 miles and less than 1,000, five cents; and over 1,000, ten cents; which was negatived, there appearing only thirty-eight in favor.

Several other amendments were proposed, either the same or similar to those which were voted upon yesterday, and were lost; among which was one for establishing a uniform rate of five cents, there being 60 for and 76 against it.

Mr. Potter, of Ohio, moved an amendment that the postage on a letter weighing less than half an ounce, and soon in proportion, be three cents; and that no post route be discontinued in consequence of the passing of the act; which was carried, 91 to 70.

The postage on newspapers was the next subject of consideration, and various amendments to the second section of the bill, were proposed and negatived; among which was one authorizing the circulation of papers of 950 square inches, throughout the United States, upon pre-payment of half the usual postage. The object was to promote the circulation of papers published by religious and benevolent societies, but in favor of which only 41 members voted.

An amendment pending, that papers, when circulated in the county where published, or within thirty miles of the place of publication, be transmitted free of postage, was carried by a vote of 70 to 40.

It was agreed that fifty per cent. of the postage on magazines and other periodicals, be remitted when postage shall have been pre-paid.

The committee then rose and the House adjourned.

#### LAW COURT OF APPEALS.

This Court was engaged, on Thursday last, and part of yesterday, in hearing an appeal in a murder case of considerable interest. It was the case of the State vs. Abram Rabon and his two sons, Abram and Duke Rabon, indicted for the murder of William Rabon, nephew of Abram Rabon, the elder, in Henry District, on the 4th September 1849. It was tried before his honor Judge Taylor, at Henry Sessions, Spring Term 1850, and resulted in the conviction of all the defendants. The case was elaborately argued for the appellants, by W. W. Hardee and Robt. Manro, Esquires, and for the State, by the Hon. W. J. Hanna, State Solicitor. The father and his two sons were present in Court during the argument. The decision of the Court will probably be given on Monday next—*Chas. Courier, 18th inst.*

#### U. S. DISTRICT COURT.

On Wednesday last, in the District Court of the United States for this District, His Honor, Judge Gilchrist, presiding.

Morgan Ashcraft, otherwise called Brown Morgan Ashcraft, was brought into Court under two indictments. Under the first, he was charged that, as Carrier of the United States Mail, on the route from Camden to the village of York, in the State of South-Carolina, he abstracted therefrom and embezzled a letter containing one article of value. The letter was written by one Jesse Brumfield, and was deposited in the Post-Office, at Ebenezer, on the 9th day of June, 1849, to be carried to the distributing Post-Office at Yorkville.

Under the second indictment he was charged with having stolen from the United States Mail, on the same route, a letter containing articles of value, deposited in the Post-Office at Coat's Tavern by one P. M. McFadden, on 23rd day of June 1849. The prisoner pleaded not guilty to the indictments. For the United States, Jas. L. Pettigru, District Attorney and Daniel Pettigru, Esq. For the prisoner, Benj. C. Presley and L. W. Spratt, Esqs.

Under the first indictment, the counsel for the defence offered no evidence, but moved the Court to instruct the Jury, "that as it appeared from the evidence offered by the prosecution, that the person at Ebenezer, who made up the Mail and gave it to the carrier was not the Post Master or his deputy, and that he had taken no oath of the office connected with the transportation of the Mail, and that as it appeared also that the prisoner was not the regular carrier, and that he also was acting, without taking any oath, the person so committing the letter to his custody had no authority to confer upon him the trust of carrying the letter, so as to charge him with the responsibilities of one employed in any department of the Post Office establishment, and therefore whatever other offence the prisoner may have committed, it was not the offence specified in the act under which he was indicted. They relied also before the Jury upon the want of sufficient evidence to show that the letter in question ever had been abstracted from the Mail, or if so, that the prisoner was the person guilty of the offence. For the prosecution it was contended that acting as carrier the prisoner was chargeable in that character; and that having been shown, the *onus* was upon the prisoner to show what had become of it. These positions were sustained by the Court, but the Jury having retired, returned in a few minutes with a verdict of "Not guilty."

On the following day, the prisoner was again brought into Court, and arraigned under the second indictment, "Not guilty." Evidence was offered on both sides, and at its close, the Jury issued a verdict to render a verdict of "Not guilty."

The Court of Appeals.—We have alluded several times to the expense of the recent slave case in New York. Our first estimate of course was a mere conjecture, founded on the general aspect of the struggle between the Common Law and the "Higher Law," or, in other words between the law of citizens and the law of slaves. A correspondent undertook to set us right and we gave place to his corrections. We have now an authentic statement. Dr. Parker of Richmond, who acted as the agent for the owner in pursuing his claim, in a card published in the *Enquirer*, foots up the bill thus:

"The course taken by the Union Safety Committee, was eminently praiseworthy. The expenses borne by the committee exceeded \$550, while the costs incurred by the claimant amounted to about 300, which sum, would also perhaps have been paid by the committee, had it been deemed proper by the claimant to have made it known."

The cost then, of recovering a slave in the city of New York, the owner living in Richmond, with an amount of favorable circumstances not likely often to concur, proves to be over eight hundred dollars!

In the meantime the legislature of New York according to the latest indications, are preparing to add to the difficulties by a legislative denunciation of the fugitive law, and not improbably by direct enactments to obstruct its execution.

*Mercury,*

Virginia.—The Virginia papers state that the whole population of Eastern Virginia will amount to 400,000, and of Western Virginia, 495,000. The entire population of the State will, it is said, be 1,100,000. Virginia will lose three members of Congress by the new apportionment.

Genius of Washington.—Chief Justice Marshall, is said to have remarked of Washington that he was a man of decided genius; but he was such a personification of wisdom, that he never put anything forward which the occasion did not absolutely require.

## THE CAMDEN JOURNAL.

THO. J. WARREN & C. A. PRICE, Editors.

TUESDAY EVENING, JANUARY 21, 1851.

#### A FALSE REPORT.

We understand that it is reported in the up-country, that the small pox is prevailing in Camden. This report is untrue, and without the least shadow of foundation. Camden was never more exempt from disease of any kind. The proper authorities have adopted efficient measures to prevent its approach of small pox to our town, and if there is a case nearer to us than the infected Districts in North Carolina, we are not aware of it.

Of one thing our country friends may rest assured; if we should ever have the disease amongst us, we shall consider it our imperative duty to make it known through our columns, as soon as the fact comes to our knowledge.

Gen. James H. Adams has again been elected Senator for Richland District, beating Capt. Black 37 votes. Capt. Black has given notice of protest.

We were led into an error last week by telegraphic despatches from Washington, in stating that Hon. Thomas H. Benton had been re-elected Senator from Missouri. Despatches from St. Louis, on the 13th inst. state that there had been 16 ballots without any choice—Benton running second best.

We regret to see that the Hon. D. H. Yulee has been defeated in his election as U. S. Senator from Florida. He is succeeded by Mr. Mallory, a sound Democrat and Southern Rights man.

#### The State Convention.

Gentlemen of the highest character and talents have been nominated to represent the interests and rights of the people of our District in this important Convention, which we regard as the one to determine the question with the Federal Government, so far as South Carolina is concerned in the issue of State action "with or without co-operation." In a short time the sovereign people will be called upon to discharge a solemn and imperative duty, elect Delegates to this Convention. Is there a man willing to close his eyes against the responsibility of our present position? It is a precarious one, and the utmost caution is necessary to be observed in every step which is taken. This Convention must be held, and its action must result in something, towards a vindication of our rights, otherwise it were better to care in at once, and leave the result to be determined by time and chance; the people are therefore to discharge this duty for themselves, and elect men delegates to this Convention, who will ask nothing but what is right, and submit to nothing that is wrong. Men firm, tried and true, are needed. Experience, energy, talent, courage, and inflexibility are necessary, under these exigencies; into the hands of such men as the guardians of our rights and liberties, are we willing to rest our cause, and to none others. According to the provisions made at the late session of our General Assembly, the tenth day of February next, and the day following, must decide this matter. The crisis is upon us and we must look the danger in the face, no time now to dwell on abstract questions. One of two things we must do. Resistance or Submission are the alternatives; in the language then, of our brother of the *South Carolinian*: "In the name of the people we call upon the nominees for the convention to answer: "Whether, as members of that body, they will vote for its final adjournment, until the honor of their State is fully vindicated, and the rights of their fellow-citizens acknowledged and secured?" "Do the aggressions of the past not only justify, but demand, the secession of Carolina from the Union, with or without co-operation?"

#### Gov. Quitman and the Government.

The Washington correspondent of the *Baltimore Sun* says: "The Marshal of Mississippi, Mr. Davis, has the writ for Gov. Quitman, and will serve it. He is prepared with an adequate force, in case of resistance. It was Gov. Quitman's intention, as declared by him some weeks ago, to resist by force, but it is not believed that he will do it."

#### Later from Europe.

The steamer Asia arrived at New York on Friday last, bringing Liverpool dates to the 4th inst. The demand for cotton was steady, and prices remained the same as per steamers Franklin and Niagara. The political news is represented as favorable.

The House of Representatives have passed the "Cheap Postage Bill" by a vote of 170 to 75. Three cents is the uniform rate of half-an-ounce letters. Newspapers are to go free of postage within 30 miles of their place of publication, and delivered in the State, beyond thirty miles at half a cent. Three cent coins and stamps are to be issued.

#### Cotton Item.

We learn from a table giving a statement of the Cotton Trade of the United States for the last thirty years, that the number of pounds exported in 1850, was 635,381,604, and the value \$71,984,616, exceeding any previous year since 1821, in value \$699,691—next in the statement, in value stands the year 1836—the total being 71,284,925.

We don't think that man competent to determine, who is prolific in his prejudgments of others and observes an invariable rule of finding fault with every one else but himself; it is commonly the case, that the man who requires the most attention abroad, receives the least at home.

#### South Carolina Enterprise.

It is gratifying to see that the spirit of enterprise is not altogether extinct in our little State, so called by some of our larger neighbors; in Charleston, we see that a Factory has been es-

tablished, and is now in successful operation for the manufacture of Castor Oil; the *Courier* in noticing the fact, says: "The cultivation of the Castor Oil Plant is attracting the attention of our Agriculturists, several of whom have been investigating the probability of its becoming an important staple product in this State. The enterprise of one of our citizens has opened a new field of labor in the manufacturing of the seed into Oil of very superior quality, and in affording facilities to growers for obtaining their supplies in abundance, and on the most accommodating terms. Mr. C. Alis, of this city, has the honor of having founded the first Castor Oil Factory in Charleston, and thus directing enquiry into the question of its profitable culture."

Two gallons of Oil are extracted from a bushel of good seed, (which must average 45 lbs. to the bushel.) Good seed is worth about \$2 per bushel. Mr. Alis has on hand for the accommodation of planters, a good supply of the best seed, which, in order to induce an increase of production, in the neighborhood of the city, he offers to furnish, in advance, not to be paid for until the crop has been made.

The Oil manufactured by Mr. Alis, is beautifully clear, cold pressed, and immeasurably superior to any imported into our market.

For the Camden Journal.

We should prepare for the crisis; we should prepare in mind and materials. I will first state what some of us have done which we should not have done, and then what we should do. Some of us have been in the habit of expressing despondency; we say to each other, the State has caved in; she has let down; she will do nothing; she has submitted—and we sometimes tell this as a secret, and it pervades the masses. Now this should not be done. Let us imagine a talking picture of every man in the State, with a down-cast countenance and shrooded shoulders, instead of heads up, soldier like,—saying, the State will do nothing; she has submitted; she has caved in; it is all wind. How would it appear, for a people contending for their dearest rights? What should you think of an army, that would do so on the eve of battle?—and what of a general that would talk thus to his soldiers? We should bear in mind, that submission is contagious; and we should bear in mind, that we may repeat a falsehood so often, until we believe it at last to be truth. The State has not submitted; she has not caved in; but she has appropriated means to go to work for her rights; she has done all that, in wisdom, she could do at this time. Now, we should speak hopefully—courageously—hope, begets hope—courage, begets courage—it breeds soldiers; we should lay aside despondency; the outer man reflects upon the inner man; we should give confidence to the distrustful—the wavering, by displaying it ourselves; we should persuade those, that are not quite with us—that are still fearful—confidence is the strength of the soldier's arm, hope is a light to him in utter darkness. Let us say, then, to each other, the State can act and conquer; the State will act and conquer; the State must act and conquer. The game is in her own hand, the Federal Government must submit in the last resort, to a Sovereign State demanding her rights. The State will act—necessity, which makes even the timid, if honorable, brave, is at her back. It is so, Carolinians; for what greater necessity could there be, to those taught to be free, than that, by inaction, they shall be slaves—the poorest and meanest of slaves? The State must act, for the enemy will, in a short time, assail us in our household. Carolinian! not long since, under the voice of our great champion, we were bold—yes! we were all very bold—declaratory of high resolves, is the man now willing to become a lamb! Behold what pictures our enemies may form of us. Not long since Carolinians! you know we were, like lions, rampant—all rampant, and should we become, like sheep, sub missive—our Governor might be drawn with a blazing thunderbolt in each red hand (with one more than Job himself is drawn) riding in a whirlwind, and like the chimera of old, breathing forth flames of fire, and the State, one great army of winged lions, each colossal, and each, with a battalion of Yankees in his clenched claws, and roaring aloud for more— "semper paratus" waving over half the baleful heavens, fraught with the dire elements of war—and beneath, a tall Palmetto waving its verdant branches wide extending—and our great dead gigantic specters, in ecstasy of the sublime parade. "But behold the scene changes! we behold another sight! A hyperbolic face follows this hyperbolic tragedy. Our great Governor now appears a Lilliputian mounted on a small don exhorting his diminished soldiers to smother on gentle lambs 'crouchan', bleeding forth, we can submit! we will submit! we must submit!—and "sic semper erimus" waving over them, canopied with a mellow, clear sky; and beheld a Yankee with a stentorian voice, harsh as the sound of a coffee mill, describing with a long pole! This, ladies and gentlemen! is the African lion, the king of beasts! and this is the harmless lamb, his submissive victim!—and by way of episode, for mere salt, he might throw in a few hyenas.—Are we, Carolinians! "Grecian women, no longer Grecian men?" Rather let each man make a battle-field, and "bite the earth" than justify "cut a figure" in such a picture! that, in after times, the admiring traveller may exclaim, this was a land of heroes! Here lived a people who died to be free!

Let us, then, prepare for the crisis; let us prepare with materials—with all the means within our power. Let every man, who is able, furnish himself with plenty of weapons of war and ammunition—let his house be an arsenal and a fortress. Let us make more provisions and less cotton—we may be required to furnish our allies; let us prepare our State as an Egypt, for a time; let us go to work and become an independent people—raise our own pork and beef and other necessary provisions; let us patronize our own mechanics—they are necessary in war and useful in peace—in brief they are the great practical powers of a country; the practical mind of a State. Behold the queen of the ocean! Mechanism has made her so. Behold the commerce she bears around the whole globe! Mechanism has made it, and