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THE SUN.

IT SHINES FOR ALL

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WASHINGTON.
MR. STANTON'S SUSPENSION.
President Johnson's Explanation.
CONGRESS YESTERDAY.
FINANCES AND RECONSTRUCTION.
THE GETTYSBURGH LOTTERY.
Mr. Van Wyck's Statement.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 12.

The President sent to the Senate to-day a message, giving his reasons for the suspension of Hon. Edwin M. Stanton, as Secretary of War, on the 12th of August last. A copy of the message cannot now be procured for publication, nor was the document read in open Senate. But the following, it is believed, are the essential points of the document.

It will be recollected that the President for considerations of a high character, requested Secretary Stanton to resign his office, and Mr. Stanton in reply, quoting the phrase of the President, said that "considerations of a high character" alone had induced him to continue at the head of the department, and constrained him not to resign the office of Secretary of War before the next meeting of Congress. This, the President says, was not merely a deliberation if not compliance with the request for his resignation, but was a defiance. Whatever propriety there might be in the expression of his opinions to others, one thing was certain. It was official misconduct, to say the least of it, to parade them before his superior officer, and showed a want of proper respect and dignity to the President. In addition to the above cited grounds of suspension why he did not resign, he denied the President's right to remove him. But the President says that under Mr. Stanton's sense of duty, he could not refer to the law creating the War Department, for that considers to the President the right to remove the head of the Department. The only other law under which Mr. Stanton could plead retention of his office, was that in relation to the tenure of office. Neither that law compelled him to resign his office. He was free at any time to resign it. The Tenure of Office Bill did not pass without notice. Every member of the Cabinet was consulted upon the subject, and particularly the Attorney General and Mr. Stanton, the latter formerly having held the office of Attorney General. Mr. Stanton was a lawyer of the law, the President says, was most elaborate and emphatic. Some reference is made to the circumstances under which the President recalled his predecessor's Cabinet, including Mr. Stanton, and he remarks as to the proposed mode of reconstructing the Southern States, all the members were in perfect accord with himself. The President, after setting forth at length his views of the war assigns a special reason for the suspension of Mr. Stanton. It will be recollected that during the summer of 1867 General Baird re-engaged from New Orleans to the Secretary of War that a Convention was about to assemble and that the Governor and city authorities thought it was a dangerous step, and would trench upon the authority of the President. Stanton did not, however, give General Baird the desired orders, nor did he communicate the fact of the reception of the dispatch to the President, who knew nothing of the existence until ten days after it came into Mr. Stanton's hands. Stanton's reply was that he had intercepted. The President therefore takes the ground that Mr. Stanton was responsible for disappointment and that, if he, the President had known that Gen. Baird had sound advice the riot might have been prevented. The President holds that as far as the public interests are concerned there is no cause to require the removal of Mr. Stanton for the present. Secretary of War has by his services of reasonably saved millions of dollars to the government.

Among the communications sent to the House to-day, was one from the War Department, enclosing the application of H. B. Saint Marie for compensation for information to michel by him, which led to the capture of John H. Surratt. Judge Advocate General Holt thinks he ought to be paid.

Postmaster General Dennison submits an estimate for the Five Military District, General Schofield, namely, $30,000 to complete the payment of expenses of registration, and election, and for incidental expenses. The sum added to the amount of deficiencies above given, makes $1,000,000 as the total deficiency for which appropriation is asked in his estimate. The Postmaster General also asks for a special appropriation of $[illegible] for the month of December, and $[illegible] for January, February, March and April, 1868.

Mr. Ashley, of Montana, Territory, has been appointed Governor of Montana Territory, vice Green Clay Smith, resigned.

Mr. Ashley is a native of Ohio, and was formerly a member of Congress from that State. He is a strong Republican and a man of ability.

Mr. Van Wyck, Senator elect from New York, is here. He says the statement published yesterday, that he had written a letter to Senator Conkling, in which he (Van Wyck) said he was not a candidate for the Senatorship, is a fabrication. He (Van Wyck) has written no letter to any one, and has not changed his position in the slightest degree since he left New York. He is not a candidate for the Senatorship, and will not be. He is for Conkling first, last and all the time.

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CONGRESS YESTERDAY.

FINANCES AND RECONSTRUCTION.

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[illegible]

Annexation.

Vice Admiral Porter's Letter. The Character and Value of the Island of St. Thomas. Its Immense Importance as a Naval Station. The Colored Population. Its Commercial Position. Our Chances of Getting It.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 12.—Vice Admiral Porter has addressed to the Secretary of the Navy a letter containing full particulars concerning the geographical, climatic, naval and commercial advantages of the island of St. Thomas, recently purchased by the United States. St. Thomas, he says, holds the most prominent position in the West Indies, as a naval station, lying directly on the track of vessels from Europe, Brazil, East Indies and the Pacific Ocean, bound to the West India Islands or to the United States. It is a point where all or any of the West India Islands may be assailed, while it may be made impregnable itself. Nothing can be more beautiful than the town and bay of St. Thomas, seen from the sea or from the summit that overlooks them. The bay is almost circular and guarded by two heavy forts. St. Thomas is a small circuit of itself and could be attacked only by a naval force. Troops could not land there, as the island is surrounded by reefs and breakers. It was captured by the British in 1807 from the Danish government, but no effort was made to defend it. No harbor in the West Indies is better fitted for a naval station. Coaling channel, but a mile to the west of the harbor of St. Thomas. It is made impregnable to any enemy. The harbor of St. John is a still better harbor than that of St. Thomas, and capable of being thoroughly defended. St. Thomas offers superior advantages for dry docks, coaling stations and arsenals. Great Krum Bay is a natural dock itself with four and a half fathoms of water, and an entrance of six feet. It would only require to be filled up across the mouth and pumped out to make a basin to the largest ships. The whole area of St. Thomas is only 43 square miles, and it is perfectly barren, so an enemy could not subsist if a landing were effected. The trees having been all cut down there is a scarcity of water. This is supplied by tanks filled by rain water. Water, however, no doubt, be established by sinking artesian wells. Steamers come in daily to St. Thomas. The society is inoffensive and the population of the island subject to the finest laws in the West Indies. Santa Cruz, Porto Rico and other islands, are to be seen from St. Thomas, and vessels can be seen approaching the port. It is rather hot in the town in midsummer, but the trade winds make it tolerable. Troublesome cactus and luxuriant vegetation are the only drawbacks. We are informed that the United States it would become a popular resort. The inhabitants are republican in their feelings and form of government. The inhabitants are mostly colored, but extremely well educated. Nearly all the clerks in the stores are colored. The advantages of the island as a naval station are obvious, when the importance of holding a foothold in the West Indies is considered. It would be a vast advantage, in case of war with a European power, to have a rendezvous in the West Indies. St. Thomas will not command any immediate outlay in order to make it an excellent coaling station. It would not be easy to blockade St. Thomas by any force, as the harbor is so well defended. St. Thomas has been more free from hurricanes than other West India islands; but violent storms are prevalent in all the West India islands. The epidemics which have prevailed have been entirely owing to the absence of all precautions against disease. Stone coal, which is imported into the islands, is said to cost twenty dollars, American coal would not have the same effect. The place is sought in Washington as a resort for invalids. The outlying islands of the Virgin group are all valuable and capable of cultivation. San Juan and St. Thomas both produce sugar cane, though indigo and cotton have caused great profit to be made. In the rebellion, when all French and British West India ports were closed against us, St. Thomas furnished us supplies and information, and offered the rebels no facilities for preying on our commerce. The United States can have direct telegraphic communication with St. Thomas, with little difficulty and expense, as there is no great ocean. "In fine," says Vice Admiral Porter, "I think St. Thomas is the key-stone to the arch of West Indies; it commands them all; it is of more importance to us than to any one else, and if Europe had leisure to attend to the matter, we would not be allowed to get the island on any terms." It may be, however, that the people of St. Thomas may prefer their present independence to being mixed up with our difficulties.

Reconstruction.

Virginia Constitutional Convention.

RICHMOND, Va., Dec. 12.—The Conservative Convention met this morning, and the committee reported the following series of resolutions, which were unanimously adopted:

1st. They recognize that by the result of the war slavery has been abolished, and it is now the duty of the people of the South to accept in good faith the situation, and to secure to all the rights and protection of the laws.

2d. They assert that the State of Virginia has resumed her place in the Union, and desires to act in good faith, to perform her duties to the Union.

3d. They protest against the grounds of Virginia being in any way not deemed in the sisterhood.

4th. The resolution of the language adopted at Cooper Institute, New York, that a military government is authorized by the constitutional rights of our government, and to adopt what is called the Proclamation of the President of the United States to the rule of a race just emerged from slavery, is a concession to the civilization of mankind and to the South, and a guarantee of the House of Representatives, which has declared a State out of the Union, to be in a state of organization, and to be governed by the combination of the military, the negro and the white men, to the exclusion of the white men, to be governed and ruled and controlled and the man of the South to be kept under control and the man of the North.

5th. That the people of Virginia will cooperate with all men throughout the Union, of whatever political party, who are for the Union, and the Constitution and the laws, and for the rights of the States, and for the rights of the people.

[illegible]

Laid on the table under the rule.

JUDICIARY.

The consideration of the report of the Committee on Judiciary was resumed in Committee of the Whole. The question relating to the organization of the Supreme Court was again taken up. Mr. Trimble offered the following substitute:

"There shall be a Supreme Court [illegible] consisting of the Chief Justice of the United States and [illegible] Associate Justices, any three of them [illegible] shall be a quorum [illegible] law. There shall be [illegible] Supreme Court, who shall hold [illegible] and who shall hold [illegible] Court. Any three judges of said Court [illegible] shall be a quorum [illegible] Court.

"There shall be [illegible] judicial districts, except the first, three judges of the said Court, and the First District there will be two. One of said judges shall reside in each district, and the Chief Justice may be assigned to any one of the districts, or to the Supreme Court, as may be necessary to secure a quorum, or to the Supreme Court in a sufficient number of cases, to be appointed by the President.

[illegible]

The portion of the resolution tendering thanks to Colonel Clark was adopted. The question was then taken on an adjournment to New York, and lost—52 to 66.

The original resolution, reconsidered yesterday, providing for the appointment of a committee to confer with the Mayor and Common Council of Albany relative to a suitable hall for the sessions of the convention, was then adopted—64 to 55.

Mr. Stratton offered the following:

Resolved, That a committee of [illegible] be appointed to wait on the President of the United States and inform him that the Convention is now ready to receive any communication he may have to make to it.

[illegible] the resolution was laid on the table by [illegible].

Mr. Ingraham offered the following:

Resolved, That two additional members be appointed to the committee on the preamble and bill of rights, [illegible] the committee on the bill of rights, [illegible]