

We make the following extracts from the report of the committee on public lands, to which were referred resolutions of the House, and memorials from State Legislatures, asking a reduction of the price of the public lands, added to in Mr. Lane's letter published last week. That portion omitted is chiefly documentary argument, relative to the conditions by which the western States ceded their territories to the General Government, &c., of not much interest to the general reader:

Mr. CLAY, of Alabama, from the Committee on Public Lands, to which the subject had been referred, made the following

REPORT:

The Committee on the Public Lands, to which have been referred memorials from the Legislatures of the States of Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, and Alabama, asking a reduction and graduation of the price of that portion of the Public Lands which has been offered at public sale, and remains unsold, and also sundry resolutions of the House, instructing them to inquire into the expediency of such a measure, have had the same under consideration, and beg leave to report:

That they have given the subject the attention and deliberation which seemed to be demanded by its nature and importance. Whether considered in reference to the interest of the General Government, the harmony of the Union, or the welfare and prosperity of the new States, which embrace the public lands, the question involved is one of more than ordinary magnitude. The committee have felt it their duty to look into the origin of the claim of the United States to the public domain, the better to comprehend the motives and inducements to the various cessions which were made by the states having claims to Western lands, and the obligations incurred by the General Government under those compacts. It is from this source that the title of the United States to much the larger portion of the public lands is derived.

The inducements to cessions, held out by Congress to those States having Western territory, were to aid in supplying the means of extinguishing the national debt created by the war of the revolution, and "to promote the harmony of the Union," and "the stability of the general confederacy." On the one hand, it seems to have been considered not only desirable to obtain the means of payment, but to gain the confidence of the public creditors, by appearing to process them. On the other, it was no less important to the harmony of the Union to surpress controversies as to territorial claims among the States, to prevent too great inequality of size of the different States, and to "up" down the jealousy which would have been inseparable from such disparity.

The public debt no longer presents any obstacle to the exercise of such policy as may, in other respects, be compatible with the terms of the compacts. Before any measure, producing an important change, can be carried into operation, it will have been entirely extinguished. * * *

If, however, the subject be considered in reference to the financial interest of the general government alone, it is believed that the price of the public lands should be reduced, after having been first offered at public sale, and then remaining a reasonable time subject to private entry, at the present minimum. The Government of the United States is probably the only vendor, either of land or of any other property, that holds the most inferior quality of any article at the same price with the best. If an individual were to maintain that all domestic animals of a given species were of the same value, how inconsistent would he appear? If a merchant were to refuse to sell *kerseys* at any lower price than he could obtain for *superfiae broadcloths*, his conduct would certainly be deemed utterly absurd. Yet there is not greater absurdity in either of these positions, than there is in maintaining that *land of every quality* is worth, or should command, the same price.

The experience of the last ten years has demonstrated that lands of the greatest fertility, when sold at auction, will only command a very small fraction above \$1.25 per acre. To prove this, it is only necessary to refer to official documents now on the files of the House. It is not probable that more than *one-tenth* of the public domain is of the first quality; yet we refuse to let the remaining *nineteen-tenths* go at any lower price.

By a report (which is hereto annexed) made by the Secretary of the Treasury on the 22d January last, in answer to a resolution of the House, it appears that the quantity of land to which the Indian and foreign titles had then been extinguished, was 301,965,600 acres. Of that quantity there had, on the 31st December, 1831, been offered for sale 130,932,265 acres; and only 26,524,450 acres had been sold. By the same report, the quantity of land subject to private entry, on the same day, (and which, of course, had been offered at public auction, and refused, at \$1.25 per acre,) was 104,407,755 acres. As evidence of the great inferiority of this large quantity of land, it is shown by the same report that the quantity which had been offered and refused at public sale, in the several States, had been in market, and subject to private entry, the following periods: That in Ohio had nearly all been in market 20 years, the greater portion from 25 to 30 years; that in Indiana had nearly all been in market from 15 to 20 years; that in Illinois had nearly all been in market for 15 years, and upwards; that in Missouri, an average of about 12 years; that in Alabama from 12 to 22 years, the average period may be said to be 15 years; that in Mississippi from 12 to 20 years; that in Louisiana about 13 years; and that in Michigan about 13 years.

In December, 1828, a statement, compiled from official documents, and printed by order of the Senate, showed that 74,358,881 acres were then subject to private entry, having been offered at public sale, and refused, at \$1.25 per acre; and that, of this quantity, 28,247,000 acres (more than *one-third*) were *unfit for cultivation*. Taking the same relative proportions of the quantity now subject to private entry as the basis of calculation, and it follows that we now have about 49,000,000 acres, *not only inferior*, but *unfit for cultivation*. Yet our system is based on the hypothesis that there is no difference in the quality or value of the public lands.

As an additional proof to the inferior quality of those *hundred and odd millions* of *refuse lands*, the fact may be stated, that it is dispersed through the oldest as well as the more recently settled parts of the States and Territories. It is not in such detached bodies, and so far removed from the improved and cultivated lands, as to impede its settlement and cultivation; on the contrary, were the soil good, its locality would afford unusual facilities in both respects. It is wholly unreasonable to suppose that such land will sell for the same price at which land of the best quality can be purchased. But, if reduced to its fair relative value, much might be sold. Inferior lands, lying adj-

Indiana Legislature.

On Wednesday evening, the committee of the whole, in the House of Representatives, to which had been committed a bill providing for an ad valorem system of taxation, concluded their deliberations, & the bill with its amendments were reported to the House; but therefore a question was taken thereon, the House adjourned. No amendments were made, materially changing the principles of the bill as introduced. The general features of the bill may be gathered from the first section, which provides, "that all lands and town lots, and all buildings and improvements erected thereon or affixed thereto, which is the property of any individual, or individuals, body corporate or politic; also all personal property, including household furniture, over the value of one hundred and fifty dollars; all moneys loaned at interest on simple contract, bond or mortgage; the capital of all merchants and exchange brokers employed in this state; all capital in public stocks or the stocks of monied or other incorporations, shall be, and the same are hereby declared to be subject to taxation, with the exceptions hereinbefore specified, to be levied and collected agreeably to law." The bill exempts from taxation, all lands sold by congress, for the term of five years from the day of sale—also exempts from taxation the property of different benevolent institutions, together with certain exemptions in favor of revolutionary soldiers. An assessor for each township is to be appointed to take a list of all taxable inhabitants and make an assessment of the property within the same. It provides for a poll tax on each male inhabitant over the age of 21 and under 50 years. The taxes of the present year are to be levied and collected as heretofore. The principal discussion in committee of the whole, took place on an amendment, striking out the amount of exemption of personal property from taxation, and in lieu thereof inserting a provision particularly designating the articles subject to taxation. While this amendment was pending, considerable discussion took place whether hogs—one of our most important staple commodities—should be subject to taxation. The principal argument in favor of designating the articles, was the trouble of making out a schedule for valuation, of every minor article of personal property, and the difficulty that would arise, in compelling the assessor to invade the private sanctuary of every man's dwelling, in order to find out the most trivial articles that would be subject to taxation. It was contended on the other hand, that there would be a difficulty in designating the particular articles, as was already witnessed in the debate, relative to the item of hogs—and that the man who makes a parade of splendor, by throwing around him a large amount of personal property, could not be reached by taxation, and consequently the provision would operate unequally. The amendment was not adopted, and the first section of the bill stands as above stated. Another amendment, offered by Mr. Crume, created considerable discussion, providing for an exemption from taxation of all dwelling houses or other buildings, where the valuation shall not exceed two hundred dollars. Mr. Henkle offered an amendment to Mr. Crume's amendment, so as not to include in the exemption buildings in towns and villages. This proposition created considerable debate with regard to the propriety of making a difference between the citizens of the town and country. Both of the above propositions also failed in the committee. No particular vote has been taken testing the strength of the friends and opponents of the bill; but it is given up, on all hands, that the bill will pass the House of Representatives by a considerable majority.

On yesterday morning Mr. Thompson from the select committee of three, made a report changing the features of the bill for a general system of internal improvement, as follows: 1. Providing that so much of the White water canal as may be deemed expedient, shall be immediately put under contract, and pledging the faith of the State for a speedy completion of the work. 2. Altering the Wabash project, so as only to provide for the survey of a canal from Lafayette as far down as Covington. 3. An amendment, providing for a survey of the White river canal, if possible, during the next summer, and if the canal be practicable, pledging the faith of the State for its ultimate completion. 4. Providing for an amendment to the bill, for a subscription of Stock, to the amount of \$100,000 in a Turnpike Road Company, from Crawfordsville via Greenfield, Bloomington and Bedford to Salem—and a change of the charter from a Rail-road to that of a Turnpike Company, on the same route. 5. The Madison and Lafayette Rail-road, to pass through Crawfordsville, Danville, Indianapolis, Franklin and Columbus—the subscription of stock to be applied on that portion of the road between Indianapolis and Madison or Indianapolis and Lafayette, as may be designated by persons subscribing for stock—leaving the subscription as before, on the part of the State, at two thirds of the amount of capital stock, to be subscribed as soon as one third is subscribed and secured, by individuals. Either portion of the road to be put under contract, as soon as a sum sufficient be subscribed and secured on the part of individuals, to entitle it to the subscription of the State subscription, for the completion of the same.

Mr. Wallace moved that the House concur in the amendments generally; when Mr. Brackenridge called for a division of the question, and the amendments be acted upon separately. Mr. Bryan moved that the bill and amendments be laid on the table; which, after an animated discussion, was decided in the negative. The question recurring on the motion of Mr. Wallace to concur generally in the amendments, the Speaker decided, that a division of the question being called for, the question would be first put on concurring in the amendments separately—when Mr. Wallace appealed from the decision of the chair—and the question being put, is the decision of the chair correct? it was decided in the negative, Ayes 35, Noes 20. Before any further question was had, the House adjourned until 2 o'clock P. M. In the afternoon the bill removing the Pension Agency from Corydon to Indianapolis, was read a third time and passed, Ayes 41, Noes 32. On motion of Mr. Kulgore, the previous orders were suspended, and the bill relative to internal improvements was taken up; when amendments were offered by Messrs. Lockhart, Phelps, Vandever and Shirv, which were negatived. Mr. McDougle proposed an amendment for a continuation of the Crawfordsville road from Sidem to New Albany; when Mr. Wilson of V. called for the previous question; which the House refused to sustain by a vote of Ayes 21, Noes 55—consequently the bill was laid over for one day. The House then took up the ad valorem bill and concurred generally in the amendments made in committee of the whole. The first section of the bill was amended in the House, by striking out the exemption of a certain amount of property and specifying the items of personal property to be taxed.

A Grain of Corn. One grain of corn, dropped by accident on the land of Major Jacob Clark, of Durham, Mass. yielded this year, nine ears, with sixteen rows each, averaging forty kernels to each row, and making the whole produce of the single grain about five thousand.

Indiana Democrat, January 16.

The *ad valorem* bill, it will be seen by our proceedings, has passed the House of Representatives by a considerable majority. Its fate in the Senate we are altogether unable to predict. Time enough will be afforded however for a definite action on the subject either favorable or unfavorable.

The subject of internal improvement is still undetermined in the House of Representatives. The bill reported by the committee on canals and internal improvements, which was afterwards referred to a select committee and reported back to the House with amendments, was suspended in its progress on Thursday by a call of the previous question. The House refusing to have the main question (to wit, on engrossing the bill) put before the fate of the amendments was determined, the subject was laid over by the rules of the House for one day. On Saturday Mr. Surrin of Fayette, on leave granted, reported a bill, varying but little from the before mentioned bill reported by the canal committee with the amendments reported by the select committee. This latter bill was read once, and an unsuccessful motion made to suspend the rules and give it a second reading. A motion was then made to have it printed, upon which a very warm and exciting debate took place, involving, in a considerable degree, the whole merits of the question, which continued till the adjournment at noon, since which it has not been resumed. *Ind. Jour.*, Jan. 20.

23d Congress.....2d Session.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Jan. 3.

Mr. CHILTON submitted the following resolution: Resolved, That the Committee on Roads and Canals be instructed to inquire into the subject, and report their opinion to this House, of the most equal and just mode of applying the revenues of the country to such works of public improvement within the respective States of this Union, as may be necessary for the facilitating of commerce with foreign nations, and among the several States. And that they moreover report their opinion of the best and most practicable mode of ascertaining and determining the nationality and importance of such improvements as may be proposed within the said several States.

Mr. CHILTON remarked, that this day was set apart for the consideration of private bills; and if any gentleman would move to proceed to the consideration of the orders of the day, he would postpone the remarks which he desired to make in favor of the adoption of the resolution which he had presented.

Mr. E. WHITTLESEY moved that the House proceed to the consideration of the orders of the day; which was agreed to.

The SPEAKER laid before the House a resolution of the Legislative Council of Michigan territory, relative to the boundary line between the State of Ohio and said Territory; and also a resolution relative to the construction of a harbor in the Territory aforesaid. Referred.

The question being on the final passage of the bill.

Mr. King of Alabama, demanded the yeas and nays; which were ordered, and are as follows, to wit:

YEAS—Messrs. Benton, Clay, Clayton, Ewing, Frelinghuysen, Hendricks, Kane, Kent, Knight, Linn, McLean, Naudain, Porter, Prentiss, Robbins, Robinson, Silsbee, Smith, Southard, Swift, Tipton, Tomlinson, Webster—23.

NAYS—Messrs. Bibb, Black, Brown, Buchanan, Calhoun, Grundy, Hill, King of Ala, King of Ga., Leigh, Moore, Morris, Preston, Shepley, Tallmadge, Tyler, White—18.

So the question was determined in the affirmative.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Jan. 7.

Mr. CARR submitted a resolution, that the committee on public lands be instructed to inquire into the expediency of granting to each fractional township in which there is no school lands located, a quantity of land for school purposes, sufficient to make them equal with whole townships, in proportion to the quantity of land contained in said fractional township.

Mr. CARR remarked that in all the new states, he believed, by the act of Congress admitting them into the Union, the section numbered sixteen in every township, and where such section had been sold, granted or disposed of, other lands equivalent thereto, and most contiguous to the same, was granted to the inhabitants of such township for the use of schools.

Mr. C. stated, that upon the Ohio river and elsewhere, there were fractional townships in which there are no lands set apart for school purposes, and there were also other fractional townships adjacent to a tract of country in the state of Indiana which was given to General George Rodgers Clark, and the officers and soldiers under his command, which is called the Illinois grant, in which fractional townships there are no school lands.

Mr. C. said, the resolution which he had submitted, had for its object nothing more or less, than to grant to the persons residing in fractional townships, where no school lands are set apart, such quantity of land as will make them equal with those residing in townships, and to whom school lands have been granted. He presumed to this proposition no one could object. The resolution was adopted.

Jan. 9. Mr. CASEY, of Illinois, asked leave to introduce the report of the engineer appointed by the commissioners of the fund appropriated by the States of Illinois and Indiana for the improvement of the navigation of the Wabash river.

On leave being granted, Mr. CASEY said, it would be recollected by the House that on yesterday the bill which had passed the Senate making an appropriation for the improvement of the navigation of the Wabash river, was referred to the committee on roads and canals. By the last mail from the West, through the politeness of a friend, he had received the report of the engineer appointed by the commissioners of the fund appropriated by the States of Illinois and Indiana for the improvement of the navigation of the Wabash. It contained some valuable information in relation to the proposed improvement; and as it was desirable that the National Legislature should be in possession of every possible information on this subject, he thought it his duty to introduce this report. It was a subject of deep and abiding interest to the people of that section of country, and he did hope that it would receive the favor and consideration of Congress.

Mr. C. concluded by a motion to refer the report to the committee on roads and canals and that it be printed; which was agreed to.

Mr. KENNARD moved to discharge the committee on revolutionary claims from the further consideration of the petition of Robert Allison, and to refer the same to the committee on private land claims, which was agreed to.

From Mexico. The bark Mexican brings papers to the 30th Nov. In the state of New Mexico, the Indians still continued their barbarities. A conductor with 740,000 dollars, arrived in the latter part of Nov. at Tera Cruz from Mexico. Congress was to have met on the 1st instant. The country generally was tranquil.

N. Y. Eve. Star.