

CONGRESSIONAL.

January 18.—In the Senate, the bill granting a township of land for the support of a seminary of learning in the Territory of Arkansas, was reported without amendment. The bill making appropriations for the revolutionary and other pensioners of the United States, was read a third time and passed. The Bankrupt bill was taken up; the amendments adopted in committee of the whole were agreed to provisionally; and the bill, as amended, was read by sections.

In the House of Representatives, after the resolutions had been offered, a brief discussion took place on the bill to alter the several acts imposing duties on imports. It was moved by Mr. Buchanan to discharge the committee of the whole from the further consideration of the bill, with a view to follow up the motion with another, to lay the bill on the table. Mr. B. disclaimed any thing like hostility to the bill, but expressed his belief that at this advanced stage of the session the bill could not be passed. The discussion was cut short, before any vote was taken, by a motion to adjourn, in order that such members as might be so disposed, should have the opportunity of giving their assistance to check the fire at Alexandria.

January 19.—In the Senate, Mr. Harrison, by unanimous consent, introduced a joint resolution for appropriating ten thousand dollars to the indigent sufferers by the late fire in Alexandria; which was read twice, considered and discussed in committee of the whole, and then referred to the committee on the District of Columbia.

In the House of Representatives, a bill appropriating \$20,000 for the relief of the sufferers by fire at Alexandria, was passed. On motion of Mr. Jennings, it was

Resolved, That the committee on the public lands be instructed to inquire into the expediency of altering the terms upon which the lands, reserved for the use of salt springs, lying within the county of Washington, were granted to the state of Indiana.

January 23.—In the Senate, the bill appropriating \$20,000 for the relief of the indigent sufferers by the late fire in Alexandria, was read a third time and passed. The Bankrupt bill was further discussed. Mr. Hendricks, from the committee on roads and canals, reported a bill for connecting the Wabash river with Lake Erie, by a canal, with a report. The bill passed to a second reading, and the report and accompanying documents were ordered to be printed.

In the House of Representatives, the discussion on Mr. Buchanan's motion to discharge the committee from the further consideration of the Manufacturers' Bill was resumed. The motion was negatived—yeas 97, nays 113.

January 24.—In the Senate, Mr. Noble submitted the following resolution, which was, by unanimous consent, considered and agreed to:

Resolved, That the select committee on roads and canals be instructed to inquire into the expediency of passing a law authorizing the General Assembly of the state of Indiana to locate a road commencing at Lake Michigan, and running thence to the Wabash river, 100 feet wide, for a road; and also, that the said state shall have the sole right, and subject to their disposal alone, one section of good land, contiguous to said road, for each mile of the same; and also, for each mile of a road from the termination thereof, through Indianapolis, to the Ohio river, for the purpose of making a road aforesaid from Lake Michigan, by the way of Indianapolis, to some convenient point on the Ohio river, in accordance with the second article as originally made and entered into between the Commissioners on the part of the United States and the Potawatamie tribe of Indians, at the treaty with the said tribe, concluded near the mouth of the Mississippi, upon the Wabash, in the said state of Indiana, on the 16th day of October, 1826.

In the House of Representatives, a bill was reported by Mr. Stairs, from the committee on naval affairs, to authorize the building of two schooners for the Naval service, and for rebuilding one. The bill for the relief of the New York and Pennsylvania Institutions for the Deaf and Dumb was taken up, but it was, after some discussion, committed to the committee on public lands, with instructions to consider the propriety of making a grant of a township to all the states which have not already received lands for literary or other institutions.

January 30.—In the Senate, an unsuccessful attempt was made by Mr. Dickerson to call up the bill for distributing a portion of the revenue of the United States among the several states.

In the House of Rep. a bill was reported from the committee on roads and canals, to authorize the subscription of stock

to the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company, to the amount of two and a half millions. The Manufacturers' Bill was discussed in committee of the whole.

January 31.—In the Senate, Mr. Chandler, from the committee on the militia, reported a bill to provide for the national defence, by the establishment of an uniform militia system throughout the U. States, and for the discipline thereof. The consideration of the Bankrupt bill was resumed. Mr. Smith, of S. C. opposed the bill. He was replied to by Mr. Berrien. Mr. Hayne closed the debate with a brief and eloquent speech in favor of the bill. The question was then taken, on ordering the bill to a third reading, and decided in negative—yeas 15, nays 25.

The House of Representatives acted on the Manufacturers' Bill, in committee of the whole. Some propositions were made to amend, but were rejected.

WAR IN EUROPE.

By the articles inserted in subsequent pages, it appears that Spain has levied war against Portugal, chiefly employing the disaffected Portuguese who had fled to Spain and that Great Britain with astonishing promptitude, has extended her powerful arm for the defence of Portugal, as bound by treaty; and in three or four days from the first information of Spanish hostilities, had despatched 5,000 men for Lisbon, a considerable part of which was cavalry, evidently designed for active duties in the field. These decisive proceedings appear to have met with universal approbation in parliament and by the people; the latter cheered the soldiers as they marched to take shipping. Indeed, it would seem to us, that England is in honor bound to defend Portugal, and "John Bull," who is always honest if left to the operations of his own feelings, is quite willing to have a quarrel with the bigot and despot of Spain.

Mr. Ganning's speech on moving the order of the day on the king's message, is an uncommonly able one. He presented an historical view of the relations with Portugal—noticed the proceedings of the countries in respect to this ancient ally of England, and clearly shewed that the latter was bound, by every rightful principle, to support the former in its sovereignty, disavowing any thing like a design of interfering at all in the government of the country. He expresses his firm opinion that France had not participated in the assault of Spain on Portugal; but said that if the war should extend beyond the narrow compass of those countries, it would be a war of the "most tremendous nature." He dwelt with much pride on the "giant's strength" of England, but would "not use it like a giant" if to be avoided without the loss of reputation—but the national faith and national honor should be maintained. He was cheered repeatedly and on all sides. Mr. Brougham deprecated war, but felt himself constrained to say, "that no alternative was left to government but the one adopted"—he warmly complimented Mr. Ganning for the part he had taken in this trying affair, and pronounced his speech to be "the best of all his best." Messrs. Hume, Banks, and Wood were the only persons who objected to the course of the ministry.

Some details of the proceedings of the Portuguese rebels, assisted by Spanish guerrillas are given. They had invaded Portugal, and fought several pretty smart battles with small bodies of the Portuguese troops. The allied rebels and Spaniards had committed great excesses in plundering the people. There seems no doubt of a direct agency of the Spanish government in these transactions.

The proceedings of France go to shew that Ferdinand will not be supported by that power in his mad career on war against the constitution of Portugal—for it is that which is the cause of offence. The French ambassador at Madrid was immediately recalled, and a charge des affaires left to explain the reasons of his departure. If France shall really decline to take any part in this matter, the war between Portugal and Spain may soon be closed, or wholly confined within the peninsula; but the French troops in Spain will be awkwardly situated, unless withdrawn. Some of the London editors, however, insist upon it that France is at the bottom of the whole business, being resolved to have supremacy in Spain and Portugal, and hence they calculate upon a general war. Certain bold speculations are offered as to the four great continental powers—that Russia is to acquire Persia and Greece, France, Spain & Portugal, Austria, the whole of Italy, and Prussia to have Hanover, &c. but we see no reason to apprehend that such gigantic designs have been formed, except in the general ambition and lust for domination that prevails in those powers.

It is not easy to form an opinion satisfactory to one's self, as to the probable

consequences of these proceedings of Great Britain, and it would be unsafe to make any calculations upon them, except that some supplies of bread stuffs will be required at Lisbon; and flour advanced about one dollar a barrel at Baltimore, on the receipt of the news. If the war shall continue and extend, it is, in every respect, our unquestionable policy to remain at peace, and we can rely on the prudence of the administration to preserve our neutrality, if to be maintained with honor and safety. It is suggested that, in the progress of events, the British may take possession of Cuba—to this France will not accord, and it would be very disagreeable to us. It will be time enough to meet that result when we have cause to believe it is about to happen, all due preparation being made, but, as observed in another article in this sheet, a change in the proprietorship of that island has a much reduced importance to us, in contemplating the making of a ship canal through Florida. Self preservation it is true, is the first law—but yet it would seem pretty daring for us to interfere, by arms, between Britain and Spain, as to the preservation of Cuba to the latter. We shall wait impatiently for further advices—accounts a month later, will probably be very important. We shall, so far as a weekly sheet is fitted for it, keep our readers instructed as to what is going on.

Two vessels sailed from Portsmouth on the 10th of December, with sealed orders which were not to be opened until they arrived off the Lizard. Some conjecture that they were bound to the United States.

Niles' Register.

Richmond.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1827.

During the whole of this winter, we have experienced an unusual difficulty in procuring paper. Partly owing to this, partly to indisposition, and partly to the circumstance that no eastern mail was received, we issued no paper last week. We sincerely wish this event may never again occur—for among all the miseries of an editor, one of the "unkindest" is a necessity of rendering an apology.

REPRESENTATION.—We have had frequent occasion to notice the prevalent complaints, that our state legislators are ignorant or careless of their duty, and it is not uncommon even to hear their motives impeached. This species of "scandalum magnatum" we look upon as most unworthy reasonable men, and a direct reflection upon the good sense and intelligence of community. If the people are so blinded to their own and their country's interests, as to depute men either so ignorant or so corrupt as to be incapable of pursuing the public good, most certainly the discredit of the transaction belongs to themselves. If, session after session, the people can justly complain of their representatives, why not, in the name of common sense, learn wisdom by repeated experience, and select men whose known probity and intelligence will be a guarantee of a faithful performance of duty?

The motives of our legislators we cannot question. Like the rest of their fellow citizens, they are generally honest and well meaning. As men, they undoubtedly inherit the ordinary feelings of humanity, and therefore require a due degree of circumspection and distrust; but they also have other qualities, which should inspire, as they merit esteem and confidence. They should be watched narrowly, and censured when they deserve it, but they should not be exposed to the darts of an indiscriminate and unreasonable detraction.

But the objection as to the want of intelligence, unfortunately, has too much truth in it. To this may be traced the singular mutability of our laws, and the distrust and disrespect entertained by so many citizens. Observing so continual and rapid changes of the laws, and so many impolitic or injurious measures, the idea instils itself into the mind, that the motives must be corrupt, or such aberrations from right and reason could not occur. This charge of ignorance, and a consequent instability, has, ever since the date of our independence, been preferred, with too much justice, against our legislative bodies. America has suffered much, very much, from ignorant and mutable councils—enough, in all reason, to warn the people of the danger, and induce them to avoid it. But while they will elect men, whose minds are not sufficiently expanded to know, and at the same time to pursue, the public good, who, but themselves, "the dear, sweet people," are in fault?

SALT.—A considerable rise in the price of this article is anticipated. Many of the principal Salt Works in the western country, and the trade with others, are attempted to be monopolized by opulent companies and individuals.

OHIO.—The legislature of this state adjourned on the last day of January, after having passed 142 acts, 29 joint resolutions, and 3 memorials.

The tax for 1827, in Ohio, is fixed at three mills on the dollar, per valuation, half for State and half for Canal purposes.

GRAMMAR.—A Tutor said, in speaking of the word *that*, that that that that lady parsed, was not the *that* that that gentleman requested her to.

MR. RANDOLPH. It is stated that Senator Randolph conducts himself this winter with the greatest propriety and decorum. He made his first speech against raising the salary of the Postmaster

General. He spoke but a few minutes; his manner was captivating, and his arguments solid.

We certainly never claimed for any of our opinions the need of infallibility. We much more frequently write to induce inquiry than to produce conviction—reflecting that, though in error, our remarks may perhaps elicit truth. We very readily, therefore, publish the subjoined communication.

Our views still remain the same as to stay laws, though we know that the uniform practice of all the states may be arrayed against us. But, for custom the transforming effect of rendering that right which is intrinsically wrong? We selected the particular section we did, only to give our plea on the subject in general, not from opposition to the Justices Act.

As to the other subject which our correspondent notices, we apprehend there is no difference of sentiment between us. He says *bad laws* should be repealed; but are all the laws radically defective which are annually mutilated or repealed? Each succeeding legislature impeaches the wisdom of all before it, by numerous amending, explaining or repealing enactments; thus rendering the laws

"Ever changing, ever new."

A word more. Our correspondent says that we should have made our remarks before the late General Assembly. Why? We can see no reason. Our remarks do not apply to it alone. Every legislative body in the Union is perhaps vulnerable to the same charge.

FOR THE PUBLIC LEGER.

Mr. Editor:—It is with reluctance that I undertake to complain of editorial remarks in any newspaper, especially in the remarks of the editor of the Public Leger, in whose correctness of opinion, I have always placed great confidence. But when a position is taken, and statements made, not warranted by sound policy, and ideas attached to laws, which do not exist; by which the public mind may be misled, or soured against those who may have been active in their passage; I deem it a duty I owe my fellow-citizens, to explain, and endeavor to prove, that the editor of the Public Leger ought to have published his strictures on stay laws, and alteration of laws, previous to the session of the late General Assembly.

It is well known to all those who undertake to read the statutes of the state of Indiana, that, antecedent to the last General Assembly, the jurisdiction of justices of the peace in civil cases, extended to fifty dollars only; by the act passed at the last General Assembly their jurisdiction was extended to one hundred dollars exclusive of interest and cost; and that, on all suits over fifty dollars, a stay of one hundred and fifty days was allowed, by the defendant entering into bond with good security. The plaintiff has a right, by the provisions of the present act, to commence his suit at any time he chooses, but previous to the passage of this act, he had to wait the tedious delay of the regular term of the Circuit Court; and as there are six months from term to term, or 180 days, and as this is a stay of greater length, and as it precluded the possibility of commencing a suit at any other time than a regular term of the Circuit Court, I conceive the late act, as it relates to the principle of stays, an amendment on our former law.

To elucidate the advantages to society by the provisions of the late act, a case will be presented, neither new nor far fetched. A wishes to commence a suit against B, for one hundred dollars, and expects, at the next Circuit Court, to obtain a judgment for that amount; B, by a species of fairness, mixed with candor, persuades A to indulge him a few weeks, and he shall have his money, without the intervention of law or process. A is induced to believe the fair promises of B, and lets pass the regular term of the Court without commencing his action, after which B refuses to pay the hundred dollars, and assigns some irrelevant matter as a cause on his part. A consequently has to wait the next term of the Circuit Court, or in other words, 180 days: now see the contrast: A has a right, by the provisions of the late act, to commence his suit before some justice of the peace at any time, and can obtain a judgment, and collect the sum in controversy, in a period of time no longer than it would have taken, previous to the passage of this act, to have obtained a judgment. If, therefore, the editor of the Leger had a desire to express an opinion, and condemn the stay laws, his opportunity would, in my opinion, have been better previous to the passage of the act which has received his censure.

I would not be understood as advocating stay laws, nor of the propriety of buying on a credit; but where one is allowed, it is right, in my opinion, to admit the other. But stay laws have not that deleterious effect on individuals, as set forth by the editor of the Leger. He appears to treat the law as tho' every person had not an equal privilege, and that, in its operation it is unequal and dangerous. If A sues B for \$100, and B, by giving good security, stays the execution 150 days, B can immediately sue C, and thereby enable himself to pay A, &c.