Florida, to be attorney of the United States for the northern district of Florida.

Hillman A. Hall, to be justice of the peace for the District of Columbia.

THE HOUSE.

The House met at 12 o'clock m. Prayer was offered by the chaplain, Rev. F. D. Power.

POSTAGE ON FIRST-CLASS MATTER.

Mr. Caswell, by unanimous consent, submitted a resolution authorizing the Committee on Appropriations to add a clause to the bill making provision for the postal service which shall reduce the rate of postage on first-class mail matter from three to two cents for each half ounce or fraction thereof. Adopted.

POLITICAL ASSESSMENTS.

Mr. Willis. I ask unanimous consent for the present consideration of the resolution which I send to the desk. I was absent on Monday, under the order of the House, and I ask for the consideration of this resolution now.

Resolved, That the Committee on Reform in the Civil Service be instructed to inquire and report to the House, as soon as practicable, whether at the recent Congressional election money was raised by assessment or otherwise upon Federal office-holders or employes for election purposes, and if so, by whom and what amount was so raised, and how the same was collected and expended; and further, whether such assessments were or not in violation of law.

The committee shall also inquire whether any Federal office-holder or employe has been dismissed or threatened with dismissal from employment or deprivation of any right or privilege by reason of his refusal or neglect to pay any assessment made upon him at the recent election, or has been otherwise interfered with.

That in prosecuting these inquiries the committee shall have the right to send for persons and papers.

Mr. Kasson objected.

Mr. Willis. With the understanding that the committee will report back the resolution within the time resolutions of a like character have to be reported under the rule—one week—I have no objection to its reference.

Mr. Cannon. Let the resolution be made to apply to members of Congress also.

Mr. Willis. I have no objection to that.

The Speaker. The resolution will be referred to the Select Committee on Reform in the Civil Service.

Mr. Willis. With the understanding that it will be reported back within a week.

Mr. Calkins. With no understanding.

Mr. Neal. No, sir; with no understanding.

Mr. Calkins. We want not only zeal, but a zeal according to knowledge.

Mr. Kasson. The resolution is referred under the rule, I suppose, which will require us to report it back.

Mr. Townshend, of Illinois. I hope the committee will not suppress the resolution.

The Speaker. The gentleman from Illinois [Mr. Townshend] objected to debate. [Laughter.]

The resolution was referred to the Select Committee on Reform in the Civil Service.

CLAIMS AGAINST THE DISTRICT.

Mr. Roseerans, by unanimous consent, introduced a bill (H. R. 6940) to amend an act entitled "an act to provide for the settlement of all outstanding claims against the District of Columbia and conferring jurisdiction on the Court of Claims, and for other purposes;" which was read a first and second time, referred to the Committee on the District of Columbia, and ordered to be printed.

WIDOW OF MAJ.-GEN. WARREN.

Mr. Wadsworth, by unanimous consent, introduced a bill (H.R. 6943) granting a pension to the widow of the late Maj.-Gen. G. K. Warren; which was read a first and second time, referred to the Committee on Invalid Pensions, and ordered to be printed.

RIVER AND HARBOR WORKS.

Mr. Townsend, of Ohio, asked unanimous consent to offer for present consideration a resolution that the Secretary of War communicate to this House the names and character of the "the particular objects" referred to in that part of the second annual message of the President, which discusses appropriations for rivers and harbors as likely to need additional appropriations at this session of Congress, together with a statement of any other works or objects now in course of construction needing such appropriations, and the amounts in each case which, in his judgment, can be profitably expended during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1884; also whether any and what part of the amount referred to in said message as the "present available balance" is covered by existing contracts; also what amount of such "present available balance" for river and harbor works will probably be on hand at the end of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1883.

Referred to the Committee on Commerce.

ALASKA.

The Speaker also laid before the House a letter from the Secretary of the Treasury, in response to a resolution of the House of the 4th instant, relative to the alleged shelling of two Indian villages in Alaska by the revenue-cutter Corwin. Referred to the Committee on Territories.

Mr. Kelley, of Pennsylvania, chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, offered the usual resolution for the distribution of the President's message, and the House proceeded, in Committee of the Whole, to its consideration.

Hr. Holman, of Indiana, moved to amend the resolution by referring to the Committee on Public Lands that portion of the message which discusses the delinquencies of the Pacific railroads. In the original resolution it is referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. Anderson opposed the amendment on the ground that the question presented was purely a judicial one.

Mr. Holman contended that the question involved was as to the forfeiture of the land.

Mr. Robeson said that, so far as he could find, there was but one clause in the President's message, which referred to land grant roads, and that referred to this state of things. There were certain railroads entitled under acts of Congress to large tracts of land, and then held on to their privilege of taking them, but did not actually take them. That was the evil referred to in the message. He did not know that this was a judicial question, but it was a legislative question whether it behooved the United States to take any action. It was a question as to whether the roads should be forced to take those lands or to give them up.

Mr. Holman then withdrew the amendment.

On motion of Mr. Williams (Wis.) the question of the Hawaiian treaty was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs instead of to Ways and Means.

The amendment was lost—51-92.

The resolution was then reported back to the House and adopted as amended.

The House then, at 1:15, went into committee of the whole (Mr. Wait in the chair) on the state of the Union.

The first bill to be considered was one refunding to the State of Georgia the sum of $35,000 expended by that State for the common defense of 1777.

Mr. Holman opposed the bill.

Mr. Blount. The question which is being discussed by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. Holman) and my colleague (Mr. Turner) is, it seems to me, a very plain one on the statement of it. This is a debt due by the Federal government to the State of Georgia. The indebtedness to which my friend from Indiana refers, the State of Georgia has nothing to do with in any shape or form. The Federal government has a lien upon the property of the citizens of Georgia which it may enforce whenever it shall see fit to do so. But it has not done so in reference to my own State or any other of the Southern States, and I apprehend will not do so. If it is proper to be done, then let it be done in that manner. But do not attempt in this way to escape a fair, plain, undisputed liability on the part of the Federal government to the State of Georgia or any other State. It has never been done.

In the Congress before the last this very question presented by my friend from Indiana was raised on a claim passed by Congress for more than seventy thousand dollars due the State of Georgia for certain payments made during our Indian troubles. This very question was in that case raised by the Secretary of the Treasury and was considered by the First Comptroller, a distinguished citizen of Indiana, its present governor. This question was then debated day after day and week after week. It was finally determined that it was an improper thing to attempt to set off a claim due to the State with claims against citizens of the State.

I think, as my colleague (Mr. Turner) has already said, that the proposition is too plain to be disputed; and I trust this House will do a simple act of justice in the matter of paying this claim.

After further debate, the yeas and nays were demanded on Mr. Hiscock's motion to strike out the enacting clause. The motion was lost and the bill passed—96 to 80.

Mr. Stelle offered a resolution inquiring how much money was expended in this country by the Cobden Club during the late elections; referred.

Mr. Kasson presented the report of the minority on the bill for abolishing the tobacco tax, which was ordered to be printed. Adjourned.

MEETING DEATH INCH BY INCH.

Terrible Scenes at a Railroad Collision—An Engineer's Fate.

ELMIRA, N. Y., Dec. 6.—The fatal and destructive collision of yesterday on the Lehigh Valley Railroad at Rummersfield station, forty-five miles south of here, occurred at 4 o'clock in the morning. The road is double-tracked north of Rummersfield, but has only a single track south thereof. On the east track, north of the junction, stood a south-bound freight train, waiting for the north-bound express train to pass. Owing to a confusion of signals, the engineer of the latter train, which had been slowed up, was thrown on the east track, and a frightful crash followed. The locomotive mounted the wreck it had caused and was in turn mounted by the express car in its rear, which broke squarely in two, almost on top of the pile, throwing the baggage man and mail messenger into the air without, however, inflicting serious injuries on either. Two sleeping-cars, which followed the express, remained on the track, and none of the passengers were hurt. In the rear coaches only one man is said to have been injured. The air-brakes prevented a fearful loss of life. On the engine of the express train were Engineer Wharen and Fireman Davis, neither of whom had time to jump after turning on the air-brakes. The latter was taken from the wreck with probable fatal injuries, and conveyed to his home. Wharen, although pinned in the wreck, was rescued before being seriously burned or maimed. The most terrible fate of all befell Freight Engineer N. Fauske and Fireman Leander Kinsman, both of Waverly. The latter was buried near the fire-pot of his own locomotive, and probably killed immediately, although he may have been burned to death, as his charred remains were subsequently discovered and removed. The wreck was in flames five minutes after the crash, as some of the cars were loaded with hay. Engineer Fauske was pinioned in the cab of his own wrecked locomotive. He saw the flames spreading around him, and called the train hands to cut away the cab. His right leg could not be extricated, and he knew he must roast alive unless the cabin could be cut away. Several men tried with the utmost energy to release him, but the flames grew and spread so rapidly that they were driven off, and no one could get near enough to work with axes. No water was at hand to subdue the flames, and he met death by inches in the flames, but bravely and comparative calmness. Hours afterward the bones and ashes of the engineer were removed, at which time nearly all the express, baggage, and mail matter had been consumed in the flames. The superintendent and his assistants, who were summoned from Sayre, are now clearing away the wreck as fast as possible.

PROMINENT PEOPLE DEAD.

Anthony Trollope, D. M. Bennett, and Others Pass Over the River.

FRANKFORT-ON-THE-MAIN, Dec. 6.—Dr. Leopold Stair, a prominent advocate of Jewish reform in Germany, is dead.

NASHUA, N. H., Dec. 6.—Judge Samuel T. Worcester, brother of the lexicographer, and ex-Member of Congress from Ohio, died in this city this afternoon, aged 78. He was a graduate of the Harvard class of '30, and a classmate of Charles Sumner.

NEW YORK, Dec. 6.—D. M. Bennett, the editor of the *Truth Seeker*, died this morning, after a brief illness.

LONDON, Dec. 6.—Anthony Trollope, the well-known author, is dead.

CANNES, Dec. 6.—Louis Blanc died here today.

LOUISVILLE, KY., Dec. 6.—Capt. W. C. Hite, who was injured a few days ago by the fall of an elevator in a carpet store, died today.

READING, PA., Dec. 6.—Adam Johnston, one of the oldest iron men in the Schuylkill Valley, and proprietor of the extensive Franklin foundry here, died of malaria this morning, aged 76 years.

Fatal Boiler Explosion.

NEW ORLEANS, Dec. 6.—The boiler of the propeller Morning Star, plying between this city and Magnolia plantation, exploded about 6 o'clock this morning at Bellair plantation. Of twenty-one persons on board, three were killed, eight drowned, and six badly, if not fatally, scalded. The steamer Sunbeam was near by, and at once returned to the rescue and brought the wounded to the city. They were sent to the hospital. Jack Johnson (white), the fireman, and seven colored roustabouts were drowned. The killed are: Henry Kaiser, Nancy Gardiner (colored), and a child named Joseph Simederin. The badly scalded are Eugene Pennyworth, the engineer; James Ryan, boiler-maker; Mary Miller (colored), passenger; Frank Holt and William Frantz, employes of the boat, and Sara Young.

Election Frauds.

RALEIGH, Dec. 6.—The case in the United States court against Dempsey Bryan, Jonas Cohen, and James Arthrell, charged with election frauds in Halifax County in 1880, was tried to-day before a jury composed of Democrats and Republicans, all white. District-Attorney Bagley acted for the prosecution and Thomas C. Fuller, F. H. Busby, and J. E. O'Hara, the colored Republican Congressman-elect, appeared for the defense. The jury, after a short absence, found the defendants not guilty. Another election case, the last of the batch against Oppenheimer, Pittman, and White comes up to-morrow. The grand jury has signed a bill against Hamlin and others, charged with neglect of duty at the election this year in Northampton County.

The Acme Social Club.

The Acme Social Club gave a very brilliant dance last night at Sheldon's Hall. The affair was thoroughly enjoyed by all those who participated in it, and dancing was kept up with undiminished vim until an early hour this morning. The arrangements were carried out without any hitch, thanks to the efforts of the following committees: Master of ceremonies, N. Keenan; floor committee, H. F. Griffin and F. Byram; reception committee, M. King, F. Newyahr, and G. Pulaski; committee of arrangements, John Lawton, J. B. Waters, J. O'Hare, and E. Gawler. Among other guests present were Misses M. Breen, M. Neland, J. Green, K. Green, D. Smith, Reid, K. Krichelt, M. Krichelt, B. Duvall, R. Cherry, J. Ash, G. Johns, C. Fearson, French, Clements, A. Caldwell, Leflingwel, A. Conner, Joyce, L. Carpenter, M. O'Dowd, Waters, K. Green, and Jenny Green.

Accident to Col. Chase.

While Col. William H. Chase was driving down Pennsylvania avenue yesterday afternoon about 4 o'clock he was run into by hack No. 9, driven by a colored man, who kept right on and did not stop to see whether he had done any damage. One of the hind wheels of the Colonel's rockaway was smashed, but fortunately no injury was suffered by the Colonel or Mrs. Chase, who was in the vehicle with him.

FLASHES BY WIRE.

—Maggie Williams, 9 years old, was burned to death in Cincinnati yesterday.

—London *Truth* says Madame Albani is to sing in the United States before Christmas.

—De Brazza's expedition in Africa will consist of 300 negroes, who will embark in two gunboats.

—Dennis Brownell, of Norwood, N. Y., was killed while trying to cross the track at Watertown, N. Y.

—Burglars ransacked the house of Col. William Harris in Cleveland and carried off $12,000 in jewelry and diamonds.

—Dr. Henry Draper's will leaves all his real and personal estate to his wife, Mary Anna Palmer Draper, and appoints her his executor.

ACROSS THE SUN.

The Transit of Venus Observed in All Quarters of the Globe.

A Cloudy Sky Interfered With the View in Many Places.

The Peculiar Value of the Observations to the Cause of Science.

The "Black Drop" and the Trouble It Has Caused.

WHY WE WATCHED IT.

Kepler, in 1631, first called attention to Venus's transit across the sun, but he advertised it at the wrong hour and she made the passage when it was night in Europe, the only place where the astronomers were on the watch for her. Kepler announced the next transit for 1761, but Jeremiah Horrox figured it out that she would appear on the sun-surface again in 1639. Like a selfish curate he kept the knowledge all to himself, and, the day of the passage being Sunday, he missed the early portions of it; but his was the first recorded observations of the

TRANSIT OF VENUS.

James Gregory in 1663 suggested the determining of the sun's parallax by the transit of an inferior planet. Halley, a few years later, worked out Gregory's suggestions, and demonstrated how they could be utilized in 1761 and 1769, when he should be dead. They were generally observed by astronomers, those of Father Hell, of Germany, being accepted. They were imperfect, however, in determining the sun's parallax, consequently it left the distance between the sun and earth unsettled to the extent of half a million miles.

It is difficult to explain the manner in which

THE DISTANCE OF THE SUN

is determined by the transit of Venus in such a way as to be understood by one unfamiliar with the principals of geometry, astronomy and trigonometry. Somebody, whose name is lost to the world, discovered, centuries ago, that the three angles of any triangle are equal in degrees to the diameter of a circle, or 180 degrees. Therefore if the value of two of the angles of a triangle be known, the value of the third may be ascertained by subtracting the sum of the degree of the two from 180. The value of an angle is the length in degrees of that portion of a circle contained between the open points of the angles of a carpenter's compasses when placed inside a circle. If the length of one side of a triangle and the values of any two of its angles be known, the length of either of the two other sides may be determined. Again, if any object, as a house or a tree, be viewed so that the whole object may be seen, the line from the top and that from the bottom of the object meet in the eye. This is known as

THE VISUAL ANGLE,

and this angle decreases and increases in a ratio directly proportional to the distance from which the object is observed. That is, if the visual angle of the house is ten degrees when viewed from the distance of 100 yards, it will be twenty degrees when seen from the distance of fifty yards, and five degrees from 200 yards. This visual angle is called by astronomers the horizontal parallax. If the exact diameter of the sun were known its distance could be quickly estimated by the principles which give the increase and decrease of the visual angle; and if the observer, knowing the earth's diameter, could be transported to the surface of the sun and obtain the visual angle of our planet, the same problem would be solved.

The distances between the various stations occupied by observers of the transit are known, which is one side of the triangle. The path traversed by Venus across the sun's disk, as viewed by observers in the Northern hemisphere, will be different from that seen by observers in the Southern hemisphere. Both paths will be parallel, but that seen by the Southern observers will be higher up on the sun's face than that seen by their Northern brethren, and the path farthest from the center of the sun will be shortest. If the difference between the time which it takes Venus to travel over these paths be accurately determined, the differences betwen the parallaxes of Venus and the sun will be known. Kepler's third law of planetary motion demonstrates that the square of the time of revolution of each planet around the sun is proportionate to the cube of its mean distance from that luminary. If the period of Venus was ascertained yesterday with accuracy the problem of determining the sun's distance from the earth becomes one of simple proportion. The task becomes complicated, however, when we consider that not only Venus, but the earth is constantly in motion, the earth turning on its axis as well as traveling in its orbit. Refraction, too, binds the rays of light and causes both Venus and the sun to appear to be in different places from those they really occupy.

TO GET THE SUN'S PARALLAX

more perfect, great preparations were made to observe the transit of 1874, but they were so unsatisfactory that they were not made public in either Europe or America. The observations taken by American astonomers were more or less discussed among themselves and these results privately made known to European astronomers, but the latter made such a failure of their photography, which was at such variance with their telescopic observations, that they made neither public, and resolved to abandon photography altogether, save in French observatories. The American photographs, however, yielded excellent results, but they as well as the telescopic observations were not exact, and hence did not accomplish the desired end. In the observations of 1874 there arose a difficulty known as the "black-drop."

HALLEY'S METHOD

consisted in observing the two internal "contacts" of Venus on the rim of the sun. There are four "contacts" in the transit. The first "contact" occurs at the moment the advanced edge of Venus comes between the observer and the rim of the sun; the second "contact" at the instant the rear edge of Venus passes between the observer and the rim of the sun; the third and fourth "contacts" when the advance and rear edges of Venus respectively pass from between the observer and the rim of the sun. As in Halley's method, the observer had to see both contacts, and a cloud might interfere with one, Delisle proposed that observations be taken from different points of the earth's surface, when, if two observers observed together any one of the four contacts, the problem might be solved. Delisle's method did not prove satisfactory in 1761, and in 1769 Halley's was again resorted to only to be defeated by the "black-drop."

"THE BLACK DROP"

is explained by stating that just before the first contact occurs a black ligament appears to connect the rim of the approaching planet with the rim of the sun, thus rendering it difficult to ascertain at just what instant the contact occurs. The same trouble occurs in the internal contacts, and when the planet is leaving the sun the ligament, or "black drop," connecting the two after the final "contact." Although Halley claimed that by the contact method the solar parallax could be obtained to within a five-hundreth of its whole amount, all transits so far have failed to give one half that accuracy. By the Delisle method, aided by the perfection of American photography (which can be defeated only by continuous clouds, is not liable to misinterpretation, is so free from error that a single negative is susceptible to an error of only about one half a second of arc), as accurate a result as can be obtained, as a good observation of both internal contacts, by the taking of but a few of them at any time during the transit.

AT THE NATIONAL OBSERVATORY.

Gen. Hazen furnished better weather in Washington than at many other stations for the observations of the transit, still the weather was far from being satisfactory. At the National Observatory there was an active lot of scientists during the entire day and a goodly number of visitors also. Prof. Frisbie had charge of the large telescope in the dome, and secured fair observations of the several contacts, as follows:

First	8 hrs.	56 min.	45 sec.
Second	9 "	15 "	09 "
Third	2 "	38 "	57 "
Fourth	3 "	00 "	53 "

Capt. Sampson had charge of the medium-sized telescope and gives the time of contacts thus:

First	8 hrs.	55 mins.	09.96 sec.
Second	9 "	16 "	18.96 "
Third	2 "	39 "	56.11 "
Fourth	2 "	59 "	37.11 "

Capt. Sampson says this last contact is not precise, as a cloud obscured the view about 20 second before the contact took place.

Prof. Harkness, who had charge of the whole affair, and operated the smaller telescope, the heliometer and the camera, says he only got two contacts perfectly, the second and third, the latter being the best. When the reporter was at the observatory he had not figured the Washington from the mean time, only for the second contact which was 9 hrs., 16 mins., 23 secs., or 10 seconds earlier than computed by the nautical almanac, showing that much of an error in former transit observations as compared with this one. He said he experienced no ligament or "black-drop" trouble, but only cloud obstructions. Capt. Sampson, on the other hand, said he noticed the ligaments distinctly, and also says he saw two small, black spots on the sun, while the outer edge of Venus showed a crescent of diffused light both in approaching and departing from the sun. Prof. Harkness secured twelve photographs before noon and forty-one after meridian. He began taking the latter at 1:45 p. m. and had forty-one taken at 2:10 p. m. He says yesterday's observations will not settle the disputed length of the solar parallax.

A telegram received at the observatory from Prof. Holden, at Madison, Wis., stated that he had a good observation of two contacts before noon, when it began snowing heavily.

LONDON, Dec. 6.—Early this morning the weather was fine, and there were indications that the transit would be successfully observed, but the sky became overcast and some snow fell, rendering the transit totally invisible from the Greenwich Observatory.

ALBANY, N. Y., Dec. 6.—The astronomers at the Dudley Observatory obtained no observations this morning owing to the cloudy condition of the sky.

OTTAWA, ONT., Dec. 6.—Mr. Blake, the observer here, took a successful observation.

BOSTON, Dec. 6.—Notwithstanding the clouds, the Harvard Observatory made satisfactory observations of the first and second contacts.

WILMINGTON, DEL., Dec. 6.—The sun was unclouded from 9 until 11 a. m. here, and the first and second contacts were observed by a number of citizens. Prof. John G. Jackson, of Hockessin, using Washington time, made the contacts—first, 8 hours, 56 minutes, 29 seconds; second, 9 hours, 15 minutes, 22 seconds.

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 6.—The morning here was cloudy for observations, but a few minutes before the first contact the sun shone forth brilliantly and afforded a good view. Subsequently the atmosphere contined so hazy that there was no opportunity to make either microscopic measurements or spectroscopic observations; but both contacts were successfully observed, and Profs. Snyder and Ritter obtained beautiful results. Both accord in being ahead of the Ephemeris time, or time got by computation. Through the six-inch telescope the entire planet was visible at first contact, and also when half upon the limb. The effect of Venus' atmosphere was seen first in the way of a delicate luminous haze around the edge of the planet while still projecting off the sun. Just before the moment of internal contact this haze was very bright. There was a decided tendency of the crisp to flash out, showing a brilliant luminosity on the dark side of the planet. The ligament which was looked for with close scrutiny showed itself very indefinitely formed.

HANOVER, N. H., Dec. 6.—Clouds prevented the Dartmouth College observers viewing the transit after 2 o'clock.

BANGOR, ME., Dec. 6.—Prof. Fernold, of the Maine State College, had made elaborate arrangements to take observations, but owing to the cloudiness the first was not secured until 12.05, Bangor time. The last interval of contact was observed 3 hours 12 minutes 56 seconds, but the final external contact was obscured by clouds.

PHELPS, N. Y., Dec. 6.—Prof. Brooks, of the Redhouse Observatory, obtained a good observation. Drifting clouds obscured the external contacts, both at ingress and egress, but the internal contact was secured. Clouds also prevented the photographing of the transit, for which extensive preparations were made, including the use of electricity for controlling the exposures. Prof. Brooks discovered several faint patches of light on Venus, which he believes were caused by the refraction of the planet's atmosphere.

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 6.—A dispatch from Lick Observatory, at 9 a. m., says: "Splendid, clear day. Forty-eight photographs of the transit already obtained.

ST. AUGUSTINE, FLA., Dec. 6.—The weather is clear and beautiful. The observation of the transit by the French astronomers on the rampart of old Fort Marion was a complete success. It was conducted in a strictly private manner. Continuous photographs were taken.

AIKEN, S. C., Dec. 6.—Up to noon clouds prevented the German astronomers from making any observations.

KINGSTON, ONT., Dec. 6.—The weather here was unfavorable, and the sun could only be watched through rifts in the clouds. Soon after the internal contact the sky became completely covered. A ring of light around Venus became very manifest long before the internal contact.

QUEBEC, Dec. 6.—The weather was so cloudy that nothing could be observed of the first contact.

ST. JOHN, N. B., Dec. 6.—A severe southwest gale prevailed, and rain fell in torrents. A dispatch from Fredericktown says that no observations had been made at the university, and that the prospects were poor for any being taken.

HARTFORD, CONN., Dec. 6.—Owing to the clouds during the early forenoon the German astronomers taking observations at Trinity College were unable to get the contact of the ingress of the planet upon the sun, but at 1 o'clock they had been successful in securing five full sets of heliometric measurements.

ROCHESTER, N. Y., Dec. 6.—The transit was not observed here by any one save Prof. Robinson at the university, who saw it just as the planet began to notch the sun's disc. Dense clouds have covered the sky all the morning.

NEW HAVEN, CONN., Dec. 6.—Prof. Lyman found, by the Yale time service, that about 9.09 o'clock there was a difference of 20 minutes 41 seconds and a fraction between the inner and outer contact of the planet with the sun's disc. He enjoyed a very fair view of the transit.

PRINCETON, N. J., Dec. 6.—Although there were light clouds the observations at Princeton College were favorable, and some of the photographs taken are very good.

NEW YORK, Dec. 6.—In the main the astronomers here are satisfied with the result of their observations. At first the atmosphere gave an undulating motion, so that the first contact was not observed as well as was hoped. At the College of the City of New York Prof. John W. Draper succeeded in getting eight plates of thirty-two discs on each plate. His plates during the first and second contacts were very good, but at the third and fourth contacts much better, and will be of great value. The plates were taken at intervals of five seconds. They will be magnified many times, and the professor will then be able to measure the discs and make his calculations. By sifting out all but the blue rays of light, which act best upon the plates, he succeeded in procuring a much sharper image than has before been taken.

BALTIMORE, Dec. 6.—A party of observers on the grounds of the Johns Hopkins hospital, under the direction of Prof. Hastings, observed successfully the second, third, and fourth contacts; the first being lost through clouds. Four minutes before the second contact the atmospheric ring was seen all round Venus, notwithstanding a rather hazy sky.

CEDAR KEYS, FLA., Dec 6.—Partly cloudy this morning. The first contact was obscured by clouds. The other contacts were clearly seen, and no trouble was experienced from the black drop. One hundred and eighty good photographs and 150 dry plates were taken.

WEST POINT, N. Y., Dec. 6.—The observations here of the first and second contacts were very good.

NEW HAVEN, CONN., Dec. 6.—The transit of Venus was carefully watched at the Yale Observatory. The most elaborate preparations had been made by Prof. Leonard Waldo and his assistant, Prof. J. E. Kirschner, professor of astronomy in the Franklin and Marshall Colleges, of Lancaster, Pa. There were five observers on duty at the heliometer, and the operations of the complicated instrument were carefully noted. The photographs were taken with the new equatorial, which has a photographic lens of about ten feet focus. Over 150 plates, showing the whole sun with Venus on its disc, were secured. These photographs are about one-quarter the size of the government photographs.

They have a reference line photographed on each plate, formed by a horizontal surface of mercury. With the heliometer a very satisfactory and complete series of measures was obtained. It includes a determination of the angles at which Venus entered and left the sun, the diameter of Venus while in the sun, and measures of the position of Venus during the transit—about 240 measurements.

Regular observations were secured with an eight-inch telescope and with the nine-inch equatorial of the Sheffield school. With the latter a series of transits, about 100 in all, was obtained. Nearly all the scientific gentlemen who made observations expressed themselves as well satisfied with the results.

ANECDOTE OF BEN BUTLER.

He Obtains Divorces Free of Charge and Makes Himself Solid with the Women.

Letter in Boston Journal

Here is an anecdote that was told me at the table the other day by a lady who said that her husband, though a Republican, was going to vote for him because he wanted to "give the old man a chance." A plainly dressed woman, evidently in mental distress, presented herself at his law office one day, and his secretary, in the outer office, told her that the General was engaged inside and could not possibly see her. "May I come to-morrow, then?" she tremulously inquired. "No; he is going to Washington to-morrow." She sat a few moments, with evident reluctance to yield her hope, and presently Mr. Butler came out and passed through the ante-room to go to luncheon. One of his shrewd eyes caught the timid figure, and he paused before her and asked her, in rapid but kind words, if she wanted to see him. "That is what I came for," she said, wistfully. "State your business very briefly, and I will see what can be done," he said, ushering her into his consulting room. She told him a sad story of conjugal sorrow, through a selfish and tyrannical husband, who had got from her the little fortune left her by parents, and not only did not support her, but abused her. He said: "Now, madam, if I inquire into this case, shall I find that you, after all, are the one to blame? Are the facts exactly as you represent them to me, and have you been to him a good and true wife?" "God knows I have tried to be, and that all I have told you is true," she answered fervently, and drawing out $50, she said, "I have borrowed this to come to you with, and I'm sorry it is not more; but do take it, and see if you can not set me free from him." The General waved back the hand which offered the pitiful sum, and said, "I will undertake your case, but your money is no object to me. I am not in need of it; but I would like to help you." He returned in due time from Washington, took hold of her case, which was so clear that he easily secured the divorce and recovered $16,000 of her patrimony for her; and even then he would accept no fee; neither did he make any overtures even of friendship toward her, beyond mere business-like humanity—the humanity of a busy, absorbed, but not ungenerous man. I have heard several anecdotes of him here as favorable as this, and in Washington he is known as a man of great kindness to the poor and the dependent.

Got "Becalmed."

A lean, lank, attenuated specimen of "Yankeedom" entered the sanctum of one of the Boston newspaper correspondents one day last weeek, and introduced himself ed follows: "My friend, I find that I am becalmy: in Washington. You see it was this wand There is a set of d—n fools in Quincy—a of I'll say just here that I'm the biggest one to the lot—who have sent me down here as Washington to get a government position. My indorsements are all first-class, headed by the tax-collector of our town; but it wasn't any use; they didn't even know him over to the Treasury. You can bet there are plenty at home that know him. Get a hold. Great Scott! Why, they wouldn't even let me have a chance to catch on by my toenails. Now, I want to go to Philadelphia, where I expect to embark in a little financial speculation at $2.75 per day; but there are a good many railroad ties between here and Philadelphia, and the weather is pretty considerable kinder coolish. Now, this is honest, I haven't had anything to eat since 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon, but I have managed to slide in two drinks." The newspaper man handed him a bran new dollar bill, with a feeling of commiseration for his washerwoman, and the Yankee folded himself together like an old-fashioned clothes-horse, and, just as he was about to close the door, stuck his head back and sagely remarked: "I hope that God will reward you in the next world, and that you'll get some dividends, in this. So'long."

Density of the World's Population.

London News.

In the seventh volume of "Die Bevolkerung der Erde," published by J. Perthes, we find that the earth, on a space of 136,038,872 square kilometers, counts 1,433,887,500 inhabitants, making on an average 10.5 inhabitants to every square kilometer. Europe is the most thickly populated portion, with 34 inhabitants for every square kilometer, then Asia with 18, Africa with 7, America with 6, and Australia and Polynesia with 0.5. Of European states, Belgium comes first with 188 inhabitants per square kilometer, the Netherlands with 122, Great Britain with 112, the Azores with 106, Italy with 99, San Marino with 91, Germany with 84, Luxembourg with 81, France with 71, Switzerland with 69, Austria with 61, Liechtenstein and Denmark with 51, Portugal with 46, Roumania with 41, Servia with 35, Spain with 38 Bulgaria and Greece with 31, Montenegro and Turkey with 26, Bosnia and Herzegovina with 22, Russia with 16, Sweeden with 10, Norway with 6 and Finland with 5. Of States out of Europe we take Japan with 95 inhabitants per square kilometer, India with 67, China with (exclusive of neighboring lands) 87, Annam 48. The United States has only 5.4, and Chili, the most thickly populated South American State, only 4.5. Excepting the Polar regions, the most thinly populated countries are Canada with 0.5, the Sahara with 0.4 and Siberia with 0.3 inhabitants per every square kilometer.

A Question of Salary.

At the last session of Congress the seat of Representative Shelley of the fourth district of Alabama was contested by J. Q. Smith. Mr. Smith died in April, 1881, before the termination of the contest, which resulted in unseating Mr. Shelley, who returned to Alabama and was elected to fill the unexpired term. Mr. Smith was never seated because of his death. Mr. Shelley now raises the question whether, under section 51 of the Revised Statutes, he is not entitled to pay from the date of the death of Mr. Smith, although he has already received pay for two months of the time. Section 51 provides that whenever a vacancy occurs in either House of Congress, by death or otherwise, of any member, or delegate, after the commencement of the Congress to which he has been elected or appointed, the person elected or appointed to fill it shall be compensated and paid from the time the compensation of his predecessor ceased.

The question is before Speaker Keifer, and it will probably be held that Mr. Shelley was his own successor and not Smith's, which will give him pay from the date when he was unseated, and not from the date of Mr. Smith's death, which latter would involve double payment for more than two months.

The Most Likely Man.

Carson Appeal.

George Gorham is the most likely man for the secretaryship of the United States Senate. His chief political crime is in refusing to be owned by anybody and his independent and clear ideas upon subjects of national importance. He was once declared the regular nominee of the Republican caucus, and but for the vexatious deadlock would have been elected.

The Old Settlers.

The Oldest Inhabitants held their regular monthly meeting at their rooms in the Corcoran Building yesterday. Nothing of importance was done, and but few speeches were made.

GULLIVER ABBOTT, OF SAWTOOTH.

His Discovery in an Idaho Cave of a Fire-Breathing Silver Image and the Bones of a Salmon-Eating Giant.

Ketcham (Idaho) Keystone.

Last Sunday Foley Abbott, of Sawtooth, went on to the high and rugged peak opposite the Pilgrim mine, on Beaver Gulch, to kill some grouse. As the "beautiful" was about three feet deep he went on snow-shoes. The trip was a hard one, as the mountain is very steep, and he was obliged to make many "tacks" to reach the summit. While he was passing near one of the high granite cliffs he noticed that there was an opening under it, and thought he had found a good place to rest and be protected from the wind, so he proceeded to it. Seeing that darkness was inside and the cave appearing to be of good size, he made a torch of slivers taken from a pitch-pine log near by, and proceeded to explore his new find. After going through a long, narrow, and crooked passage he found himself inside of a large chamber with smooth floor and perfectly dry, which was brilliantly lighted by a flame in the centre. As this was the main attraction he cautiously went to it. To his astonishment he found an image of a man, made of what had the appearance of silver, and which he thinks it is. At the head was a peculiar-patterned helmet, in which were three imitation feathers, made of gold or copper. From the mouth of the strange image proceeded the flame. Mr. Abbott thinks that the prehistoric and undoubtedly very intelligent race that erected it had discovered a gas-jet, and that there is communication down through the body to the solid rock, from which the gas proceeds perpetually. It is an evidence that there is an immense body of coal oil under the mountain, from which the gas proceeds. After satisfying his curiosity looking at the wonderful lamp he tremblingly commenced a search for other objects.

On the walls were hieroglyphics, which of course he could not read. In one corner was a very large human skeleton—at least nine feet high—and by it a stone tomahawk and a large cross-bow which, although it had the appearance of being perfectly sound, fell into a thousand pieces when he attempted to lift it. A stone mortar containing some very rich gold specimens was found, and also some large pieces of ruby silver. Some back-bones of salmon were scattered around, proving that the inhabitants of the cavern were salmon eaters. There were many other things in the apartment, such as arrow-heads, bones of animals, and a petrified human hand.

THE JERSEY LILY

Not Nearly So Lovely as She Has Been Painted.

Richardson, the artist who takes pictures for Sarony, was asked about Langtry's photographs. He said:

"I've been devoting the last three Sundays to her. Last Sunday I made forty negatives of her."

"Did she talk very much while here?"

"Oh, bless you, no. We cracked her right through, so that she didn't get any time for that. Forty negatives in an hour and a half is pretty quick work, let me tell you. It was hurry-scurry all the time. Oh, we rattled her right along."

"You have seen a great many beautiful women in your day on account of your business. Now, do you think she is beautiful?"

"She is a high-cheek-boned woman. Is that beauty?"

"Then you don't think she's the most beautiful woman that ever had her picture taken here?"

"What?" he replied, snapping his braces against his shoulders; "why, not much. Ten years ago, when Fanny Davenport was in her prime, she was much more beautiful than Mrs. Langtry. There was something grand and majestic and beautiful about her. She couldn't be beaten. She is the most beautiful woman ever I photographed. Mrs. Langtry is what I call charming, but not beautiful. Oh, no."

"Did Mrs. Langtry say in regard to the pictures you made of her, as she is reported to have said, 'They make me pretty; I'm beautiful?'"

"I believe she did," the artist replied.

Young Ben Hill.

Chicago Herald.

The men who tries to climb into political prominence by parading his father's fame is almost certain to make an ass of himself. Young Ben Hill, of Georgia, in his effort to reach the United States Senate, cut a most ludicrous figure when he undertook to invoke the spirit of his departed sire in aid of his candidacy. In a burst of eloquence he exclaimed:

"Would that the windows of heaven were opened to-night, and the spirit of him whose last political utterance was a prayer for your deliverance, and whose last political prophecy was of your success, might hear your shouts of triumph as they greeted the stars. The hosannah's of the redeemed around the throne would sound no sweeter to his ears than the voices of the people he loved bringing knowledge of their redemption from radical coalition."

Of course no one fool enough to make such a speech as this would be likely to be sent to the United States Senate. Whatever Ben Hill may have been, young Ben is a "dam-phool."

Beecher Brings Down the House.

New York Tribune.

The Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, than whom few public speakers have shown themselves more ready with apt allusions and sallies of wit, has seldom "brought down the house" with a single sentence more successfully than he did last Monday evening. Plymouth Church was crowded to the doors with one of its characteristic audiences, and Miss Frances E. Willard, of Chicago, delivered a lecture on the work