

***WILLIAM
HORATIO BARNES***



***HISTORY
OF THE THIRTY-
NINTH CONGRESS
OF THE UNITED
STATES***

William Horatio Barnes

History of the Thirty-Ninth Congress of the United States

EAN 8596547337010

DigiCat, 2022

Contact: DigiCat@okpublishing.info



TABLE OF CONTENTS

[PREFACE.](#)

[LIST OF PORTRAITS.](#)

[INTRODUCTORY.](#)

[CHAPTER I.](#)

[CHAPTER II.](#)

[CHAPTER III.](#)

[CHAPTER IV.](#)

[CHAPTER V.](#)

[CHAPTER VI.](#)

[CHAPTER VII.](#)

[CHAPTER VIII.](#)

[CHAPTER IX.](#)

[CHAPTER X.](#)

[CHAPTER XI.](#)

[CHAPTER XII.](#)

[CHAPTER XIII.](#)

[CHAPTER XIV.](#)

[CHAPTER XV.](#)

[CHAPTER XVI.](#)

[CHAPTER XVII.](#)

[CHAPTER XVIII.](#)

[CHAPTER XIX.](#)

[CHAPTER XX.](#)

[CHAPTER XXI.](#)

[CHAPTER XXII.](#)

[CHAPTER XXIII.](#)

CHAPTER XXIV.

CHAPTER XXV.

BIOGRAPHICAL INDEX OF THE THIRTY-NINTH CONGRESS.

ANALYTICAL INDEX

THE END.

PREFACE.

[Table of Contents](#)

The history of the Thirty-Ninth Congress is a sequel to that of the Rebellion. This having been overthrown, it remained for Congress to administer upon its effects. It depended upon the decisions of Congress whether the expected results of our victories should be realized or lost.

Now that the work of the Thirty-Ninth Congress stands forth complete, people naturally desire to know something of the manner in which the rough material was shaped into order, and the workmanship by which the whole was "fitly joined together." It can not be said of this fabric of legislation that it went up without "the sound of the hammer." The rap of the gavel was often heard enforcing order or limiting the length of speeches.

Discussion is the process by which legislation is achieved; hence no history of legislation would be complete without presenting the progress of debate preparatory to the adoption of important measures. The explanation of what our legislators did is found in what they said. Debates, as presented in the following pages, are by necessity much abridged. No attempt has been made to give a summary or synopsis of speeches. That which seemed to be the most striking or characteristic passage in a speech is given, in the words of the orator.

Many things said and done in the Thirty-Ninth Congress, of great importance to the nation, are by necessity omitted. The reader, in forming his opinion of Congressional character and ability, will bear in mind that those who speak most frequently are not always the most useful legislators. Men from whom no quotation is made, and to whom no measure is attributed in the following pages, may be among the foremost in watchfulness for their constituents, and faithfulness to the country.

If it should seem that one subject — the negro question — occupied too much of the time and attention of Congress, it must be borne in mind that this subject was thrust upon Congress and the country by the issue of the Rebellion, and must be definitely and finally settled before the nation can be at rest. "Unsettled questions have no pity on the repose of mankind."

No attempt has been made to present a journal of Congressional proceedings, giving a detail of what was said and done from day to day in the Senate and the House. There was always some great national question under consideration in one or the other House, forming an uninterrupted series of discussions and transactions. To present these in review is to give a history of the Thirty-Ninth Congress, since they distinguish it from all its predecessors, and make it historical.

CHAPTER I.—Opening Scenes.

(Page 13-21.)

Momentous Events of the Vacation — Opening of the Senate —

Mr. Wade — Mr. Sumner — Mr. Wilson — Mr. Harris — Edward McPherson — As Clerk of the preceding Congress, he calls the House to order — Interruption of Roll-call by Mr. Maynard — Remarks by Mr. Brooks — His Colloquy with Mr. Stevens — Mr. Colfax elected Speaker — His Inaugural Address — The Test Oath.

CHAPTER II.—Locations of the Members and Cast of the Committees.

(Page 22-32.)

Importance of surroundings — Members sometimes referred to by their seats — Senator Andrew Johnson — Seating of the Senators — Drawing in the House — The Senate Chamber as seen from the Gallery — Distinguished Senators — The House of Representatives — Some prominent characters — Importance of Committees — Difficulty in their appointment — Important Senate Committees — Committees of the House.

CHAPTER III.—Formation of the Joint Committee on Reconstruction.

(Page 33-49.)

Lack of Excitement — Cause — The Resolution — Dilatory Motions — Yeas and Nays — Proposed Amendments in the Senate — Debate in the Senate — Mr. Howard — Mr. Anthony — Mr. Doolittle — Mr. Fessenden — Mr. Saulsbury — Mr. Hendricks — Mr. Trumbull — Mr. Guthrie — Passage of the Resolution in the Senate — Yeas and Nays — Remarks of Mr. Stevens on the Amendment of the Senate — Concurrence of the House — The Committee appointed.

CHAPTER IV.—Suffrage in the District of Columbia.

(Page 50-94.)

Duty of Congress to Legislate for the District of Columbia — Suffrage Bill introduced into the House — Speech by Mr. Wilson — Mr. Boyer — Mr. Schofield — Mr. Kelly — Mr. Rogers — Mr. Farnsworth — Mr. Davis — Mr. Chanler — Mr. Bingham — Mr. Grinnell — Mr. Kasson — Mr. Julian — Mr. Thomas — Mr. Darling — Mr. Hale's Amendment — Mr. Thayer — Mr. Van Horn — Mr. Clarke — Mr. Johnson — Mr. Boutwell.

CHAPTER V.—The Freedmen.

(Page 95-103.)

Necessities of the Freedmen — Committee in the House — Early Movement by the Senate in behalf of Freedmen — Senator Wilson's Bill — Occasion for it — Mr. Cowan Moves its reference — Mr. Reverdy Johnson advises deliberation — A Question of time With Mr. Sherman — Mr. Trumbull promises a more efficient Bill — Mr. Sumner presents proof of the bad condition of affairs in the South — Mr. Cowan and Mr. Stewart produce the President as a Witness for the Defense — Mr. Wilson on the Testimony — "Conservatism" — The Bill absorbed in greater measures.

CHAPTER VI.—The Freedmen's Bureau Bill in the Senate.

(Page 104-137.)

The Bill introduced and referred to Judiciary Committee — Its provisions — Argument of Mr. Hendricks against it — Reply of Mr. Trumbull — Mr. Cowan's Amendment — Mr. Guthrie wishes to relieve Kentucky from the operation of the bill — Mr. Creswell desires that Maryland may enjoy the benefits of the bill — Mr. Cowan's Gratitude to God and Friendship for the Negro — Remarks by Mr. Wilson — "The short gentleman's long speech" — Yeas and Nays — Insulting title.

CHAPTER VII.—The Freedmen's Bureau Bill in the House.

(Page 138-157.)

The Bill Reported To the House — Mr. Eliot's Speech — History — Mr. Dawson Vs. the Negro — Mr. Garfield — The Idol Broken — Mr. Taylor Counts the Cost — Mr. Donnelly's Amendment — Mr. Kerr — Mr. Marshall On White Slavery — Mr. Hubbard — Mr. Moulton — Opposition From Kentucky — Mr. Ritter — Mr. Rosseau's Threat — Mr. Shanklin's Gloomy Prospect — Mr. Trimble's Appeal — Mr. McKee an Exceptional Kentuckian — Mr. Grinnell on Kentucky — The Example of Russia — Mr. Phelps — Mr. Shellabarger's Amendment — Mr. Chanler — Mr. Stevens' Amendments — Mr. Eliot Closes the Discussion — Passage of The Bill — Yeas and Nays.

CHAPTER VIII.—The Senate and the Veto Message.

(Page 158-187.)

Mr. Trumbull on the Amendments of the House — Mr. Guthrie exhibits feeling — Mr. Sherman's deliberate Conclusion — Mr. Henderson's sovereign remedy — Mr. Trumbull on patent medicines — Mr. McDougall a white Man — Mr. Reverdy Johnson on the power to pass the Bill — Concurrence of the House — The Veto Message — Mr. Lane, of Kansas — His efforts for delay — Mr. Garrett Davis — Mr. Trumbull's reply to the President — The Question taken — Yeas and Nays — Failure of passage.

CHAPTER IX.—The Civil Rights Bill in the Senate.

(Page 188-219.)

Duty of Congress consequent upon the Abolition of Slavery —

Civil Rights Bill introduced — Reference to Judiciary

Committee — Before the Senate — Speech By Mr. Trumbull —

Mr. Saulsbury — Mr. van Winkle — Mr. Cowan — Mr. Howard

— Mr. Johnson — Mr. Davis — Conversations with Mr.

Trumbull and Mr. Clark — Reply of Mr. Johnson — Remarks by

Mr. Morrill — Mr. Davis "wound Up" — Mr. Guthrie's Speech

— Mr. Hendricks — Reply of Mr. Lane — Mr. Wilson — Mr.

Trumbull's closing remarks — Yeas And Nays on the passage of the Bill.

CHAPTER X.—The Civil Rights Bill in the House of Representatives.

(Page 220-244.)

The Bill referred to the Judiciary Committee and reported back — Speech by the Chairman of the Committee — Mr.

Rogers — Mr. Cook — Mr. Thayer — Mr. Eldridge — Mr.

Thornton — Mr. Windom — Mr. Shellabarger — Mr. Broomall

— Mr. Raymond — Mr. Delano — Mr. Kerr — Amendment by Mr.

Bingham — His Speech — Reply by his Colleague —

Discussion closed by Mr. Wilson — Yeas and Nays on the

passage of the Bill — Mr. Le Blond's proposed title — Amendments of the House accepted by the Senate.

CHAPTER XI.—The Civil Rights Bill and the Veto.

(Page 245-293.)

Doubts as to the President's Decision — Suspense ended

—

The Veto Message — Mr. Trumbull's Answer — Mr. Reverdy Johnson defends the Message — Rejoinder — Remarks of Mr. Yates — Mr. Cowan appeals to the Country — Mr. Stewart shows how States may make the Law a Nullity — Mr. Wade

—

Mr. McDougall on Persian Mythology — Mr. J. H. Lane defends

the President — Mr. Wade — The President's Collar — Mr. Brown — Mr. Doolittle — Mr. Garrett Davis — Mr. Saulsbury — Yeas And Nays in the Senate — Vote in the House — The Civil Rights Bill becomes a Law.

CHAPTER XII.—The Second Freedmen's Bureau Bill becomes a Law.

(Page 294-306.)

The Discovery of the Majority — The Senate Bill — The House Bill — Its Provisions — Passage of the Bill — Amendment and Passage in the Senate — Committee of

Conference — The Amendments as Accepted — The Bill as Passed — The Veto — The Proposition of a Democrat accepted
— Confusion in Leadership — Passage of the Bill over The Veto — It Becomes a Law.

CHAPTER XIII.—First Words on Reconstruction.

(Page 307-323.)

Responsibility of the Republican Party — Its Power and Position — Initiatory Step — Mr. Stevens speaks for himself — Condition of the Rebel States — Constitutional Authority under which Congress should act — Estoppel — What Constitutes Congress — The First Duty — Basis of Representation — Duty on exports — Two Important Principles — Mr. Raymond's Theory — Rebel States still in the Union — Consequences of the Radical Theory — Conditions to be required — State Sovereignty — Rebel Debt — Prohibition of Slavery — Two Policies contrasted — Reply of Mr. Jenckes — Difference in Terms, not in Substance — Logic of the Conservatives leads to the Results of the Radicals.

CHAPTER XIV.—The Basis of Representation in the House.

(Page 324-372.)

First work of the Joint Committee — The Joint Resolution proposing a Constitutional Amendment — Mr. Stevens' reasons for speedy action — Protracted Discussion Commenced — Objections to the Bill by Mr. Rogers — Defense by Mr. Conkling — Two other Modes — How States might Evade the Law — Not a Finality — Wisconsin and South Carolina — Amendment for Female Suffrage proposed — Orth on Indiana and Massachusetts — Obscuration of the Sun — More Radical Remedy desired — A Kentuckian gratified — Citations from the Census — Premium for Treason — White Slaves — Power to amend well-nigh exhausted — Objections to the Suffrage Basis — "Race" and "Color" ambiguous — Condition of the Question — Recommitted — Final Passage.

CHAPTER XV.—The Basis of Representation in the Senate.

(Page 373-414.)

The Joint Resolution goes to the Senate — Counter-proposition by Mr. Sumner — He Speaks Five Hours — Mr. Henderson's Amendment — Mr. Fessenden — Mr. Henry S. Lane — Mr. Johnson — Mr. Henderson — Mr. Clark's Historical Statements — Fred. Douglass' Memorial — Mr. Williams — Mr. Hendricks — Mr. Chandler's "blood-letting Letter" — Proposition of Mr. Yates — His Speech — Mr. Buckalew against New England — Mr. Pomeroy — Mr.

Sumner's
second Speech — Mr. Doolittle — Mr. Morrill — Mr.
Fessenden meets Objections — Final Vote — The
Amendment
defeated.

CHAPTER XVI.—Representation of the Southern States.

(Page 417-433.)

Concurrent Resolution — A "Venomous Fight" — Passage
in
the House — The Resolution in the Senate — "A Political
Wrangle" deprecated — Importance of the Question — "A
Straw in a Storm" — Policy of the President — Conversation
between two Senators — Mr. Nye's Advice to Rebels — "A
Dangerous Power" — "Was Mr. Wade once a Secessionist?"
—
Garrett Davis' Programme for the President — "Useless yet
Mischievous" — The Great Question Settled.

CHAPTER XVII.—The Reconstruction Amendment in the House.

(Page 434-451.)

A Constitutional Amendment proposed and postponed —
Proposition by Mr. Stewart — The Reconstruction
Amendment
— Death of its Predecessor lamented — Opposition to the

Disfranchisement of Rebels — "The Unrepentent Thirty-three"

— Nine-tenths Reduced to One-twelfth — Advice to Congress — The Committee denounced — Democratic and Republican Policy compared — Authority without Power — A Variety of Opinions — An Earthquake predicted — The Joint Resolution passes the House.

CHAPTER XVIII.—The Reconstruction Amendment in the Senate.

(Page 452-455.)

Difference between Discussions in the House and in the Senate — Mr. Sumner proposes to postpone — Mr. Howard takes Charge of the Amendment — Substitutes proposed — The Republicans in Council — The Disfranchising Clause stricken out — Humorous Account by Mr. Hendricks — The Pain and Penalties of not holding Office — A Senator's Piety appealed to — Howe vs. Doolittle — Marketable Principles — Praise of the President — Mr. McDougall's Charity — Vote of the Senate — Concurrence in the House.

CHAPTER XIX.—Report of the Committee on Reconstruction.

(Page 466-472.)

An important State Paper — Work of the Committee —
Difficulty of obtaining information — Theory of the
President — Taxation and Representation — Disposition and
doings of the Southern People — Conclusion of the
Committee
— Practical Recommendations.

CHAPTER XX.—Restoration of Tennessee.

(Page 473-482.)

Assembling of the Tennessee Legislature —
Ratification of the Constitutional Amendment —
Restoration of Tennessee proposed in Congress —
The Government of Tennessee not Republican —
Protest against the Preamble — Passage in the House
— New Preamble proposed — The President's
Opinion deprecated and disregarded — Passage in
the Senate — The President's Approval and Protest —
Admission of Tennessee Members — Mr. Patterson's
Case.

CHAPTER XXI.—Negro Suffrage.

(Page 483-501.)

Review of the preceding action — Efforts of Mr. Yates for
Unrestricted Suffrage — Davis's Amendment to Cuvier —
The
"Propitious Hour" — The Mayor's Remonstrance — Mr.

Willey's Amendment — Mr. Cowan's Amendment for Female Suffrage — Attempt to out-radical the Radicals — Opinions for and against Female Suffrage — Reading and Writing as a Qualification — Passage of the Bill — Objections of the President — Two Senators on the Opinions of the People — The Suffrage Bill becomes a Law.

CHAPTER XXII.—The Military Reconstruction Act.

(Page 502-551.)

Proposition by Mr. Stevens — "Piratical Governments" not to be recognized — The Military Feature introduced — Mr. Schofield's Dog — The Only Hope of Mr. Hise — Conversation concerning the Reconstruction Committee — Censure of a Member — A Military Bill Reported — War Predicted — The "Blaine Amendment" — Bill passes the House — In the Senate — Proposition to Amend — Mr. McDougall desires Liberty of Speech — Mr. Doolittle pleads for the Life of the Republic — Mr. Sherman's Amendment — Passage in the Senate — Discussion and Non-concurrence in the House — The Senate unyielding — Qualified Concurrence of the House — The Veto — "The Funeral of the Nation" — The Act — Supplementary Legislation.

CHAPTER XXIII.—Other Important Acts.

(Page 552-560.)

Equalizing Bounties — The Army — The Department of Education — Southern Homesteads — The Bankrupt Law — The
Tariff — Reduction of Taxes — Contracting the Currency —
Issue of Three Per Cents. — Nebraska and Colorado —
Tenure
of Office.

CHAPTER XXIV.—The President and Congress.

(Page 561-567.)

The President's treatment of the South — First Annual
Message — Mr. Sumner's Criticism — The President
triumphant — He damages his Cause — Humor of Mr.
Stevens
— Vetoes Overridden — The Question submitted to the
People
— Their Verdict — Summary of Vetoes — Impeachment —
Charges by Mr. Ashley — Report of the Committee.

CHAPTER XXV.—Personal.

(Page 568-576.)

Contested Seats — Mr. Stockton votes for Himself — New
Jersey's Loss of two Senators — Losses of Vermont —

Suicide of James H. Lane — Death in the House — General Scott — Lincoln's Eulogy and Statue — Mr. Sumner on Fine Arts in the Capitol — Censure of Mr. Chanler — Petition for the Expulsion of Garret Davis — Grinnell assaulted by Rousseau — The Action of the House — Leader of the House.

Biographical Sketches 577

LIST OF PORTRAITS.

[Table of Contents](#)

P
A
G
E
1
.
—
H
o
n
.
S
c
h
u
y

I
e
r
C
o
l
f
a
x
,
F
r
o
n
t
i
s
p
i
e
c
e
.

- 2.—Hon. Thaddeus Stevens, 29
- 3.—Hon. William D. Kelley, 59
- 4.—Hon. Sidney Clarke, 89
- 5.—Hon. Thomas A. Hendricks, 109
- 6.—Hon. Henry Wilson, 135
- 7.—Hon. Samuel C. Pomeroy, 171
- 8.—Hon. Reverdy Johnson, 203

- 9.—Hon. James F. Wilson, 239
- 10.—Hon. William M. Stewart, 275
- 11.—Hon. Ebon C. Ingersoll, 307
- 12.—Hon. Robert C. Schenck, 353
- 13.—Hon. Richard Yates, 399
- 14.—Hon. Edwin D. Morgan, 453
- 15.—Hon. William B. Stokes, 481
- 16.—Hon. George H. Williams, 517
- 17.—Hon. John Conness, 541
- 18.—Hon. James M. Ashley, 567

INTRODUCTORY.

[Table of Contents](#)

By HON. SCHUYLER COLFAX,

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

The Congress that has just passed away has written a record that will be long remembered by the poor and friendless, whom it did not forget. Misrepresented or misunderstood by those who denounced it as enemies, harshly and unjustly criticised by some who should have been its friends, it proved itself more faithful to human progress and liberty than any of its predecessors. The outraged and oppressed found in these congressional halls

champions and friends. Its key-note of policy was protection to the downtrodden. It quailed not before the mightiest, and neglected not the obscurest. It lifted the slave, whom the nation had freed, to the full stature of manhood. It placed on our statute-book the Civil Rights Bill as our nation's magna charta, grander than all the enactments that honor the American code; and in all the region whose civil governments had been destroyed by a vanquished rebellion, it declared as a guarantee of defense to the weakest that the freeman's hand should wield the freeman's ballot; and that none but loyal men should govern a land which loyal sacrifices had saved. Taught by inspiration that new wine could not be safely put in old bottles, it proclaimed that there could be no safe or loyal reconstruction on a foundation of unrepentant treason and disloyalty.

The first session of the Thirty-ninth Congress proposed, as their plan of Reconstruction, a Constitutional Amendment. It was a bond of public justice and public safety combined, to be embodied in our national Constitution, to show to our posterity that patriotism is a virtue and rebellion is a crime. These terms were more magnanimous than were ever offered in any country under like circumstances. They were kind, they were forbearing, they were less than we had a right to demand; but in our anxiety, in our desire to close up this question, we made the proposition. How was it received? They trampled upon it, they spat upon it, they repudiated it, and said they would have nothing to do with it. They were determined to have more power after the rebellion than they had before.

When this proposition was repudiated, we came together again, at the second session of the same Congress, to devise some other plan of reconstruction in place of the proffer that had been spurned. We put the basis of our reconstruction, first, upon every loyal man in the South, and then we gave the ballot also to every man who had only been a traitor. The persons we excluded, for the present, from suffrage in the South, were not the thousands who struggled in the rebel army, not the millions who had given their adhesion to it, but only those men who had sworn allegiance to the Constitution and then added to treason the crime of perjury.

Though we demand no indemnity for the past, no banishment, no confiscations, no penalties for the offended law, there is one thing we do demand, there is one thing we have the power to demand, and that is security for the future, and that we intend to have, not only in legislation, but imbedded in the imperishable bulwarks of our national Constitution, against which the waves of secession may dash in future but in vain. We intend to have those States reconstructed on such enduring corner-stones that posterity shall realize that our fallen heroes have not died in vain.

CHAPTER I.

[Table of Contents](#)

OPENING SCENES.

Momentous Events of the Vacation — Opening of the Senate —

Mr. Wade — Mr. Sumner — Mr. Wilson — Mr. Harris — Edward McPherson — As Clerk of the preceding Congress, he calls the House to order — Interruption of Roll-call by Mr.

Maynard — Remarks by Mr. Brooks — His Colloquy with Mr. Stevens — Mr. Colfax elected Speaker — His Inaugural Address — The Test Oath.

The Thirty-ninth Congress of the United States, convened in the Capitol at Washington on the fourth of December, 1865. Since the adjournment of the Thirty-eighth Congress, events of the greatest moment had transpired—events which invested its successor with responsibilities unparalleled in the history of any preceding legislative body.

Abraham Lincoln, sixteenth President of the United States, had been slain by the hand of the assassin. The crime had filled the land with horror. The loss of its illustrious victim had veiled the nation in unaffected grief.

By this great national calamity, Andrew Johnson, who on the fourth of March preceding had taken his seat simply to

preside over the deliberations of the Senate, became President of the United States.

Meanwhile the civil war, which had been waged with such terrible violence and bloodshed for four years preceding, came to a sudden termination. The rebel armies, under Generals Lee and Johnston, had surrendered to the victorious soldiers of the United States, who in their generosity had granted to the vanquished terms so mild and easy as to excite universal surprise.

Jefferson Davis, Alexander H. Stephens, and some other leaders in the rebellion, had been captured and held for a time as State prisoners; but, at length, all save the "President of the Confederate States" were released on parole, and finally pardoned by the President.

The President had issued a proclamation granting amnesty and pardon to "all who directly or indirectly participated in the rebellion, with restoration of all rights of property, except as to slaves," on condition of their subscribing to a prescribed oath. By the provisions of this proclamation, fourteen classes of persons were excepted from the benefits of the amnesty offered therein, and yet "any person belonging to the excepted classes" was encouraged to make special application to the President for pardon, to whom clemency, it was declared, would "be liberally extended." In compliance with this invitation, multitudes had obtained certificates of pardon from the President, some of whom were at once elected by the Southern people, to represent them, as Senators and Representatives, in the Thirty-ninth Congress.

The President had further carried on the work of reconstruction by appointing Provisional Governors for many of the States lately in rebellion. He had recognized and entered into communication with the Legislatures of these States, prescribing certain terms on which they might secure representation in Congress, and recognition of "all their rights under the Constitution."

By these and many other events which had transpired since the expiration of the preceding Congress, the legislation pertaining to reconstruction had become a work of vast complexity, involving principles more profound, and questions more difficult, than ever before presented for the consideration and solution of men assembled in a legislative capacity.

At twelve o'clock on the day designated in the Constitution for the meeting of Congress, the Senate assembled, and was called to order by Hon. Lafayette S. Foster, President pro tempore. Senators from twenty-five States were in their seats, and answered to their names. Rev. E. H. Gray, Chaplain of the Senate, invoked the blessing of Almighty God upon Congress, and prayed "that all their deliberations and enactments might be such as to secure the Divine approval, and insure the unanimous acquiescence of the people, and command the respect of the nations of the earth."

Soon after the preliminary formalities of opening the Senate had transpired, Benjamin F. Wade, Senator from Ohio, inaugurated the labors of the Thirty-ninth Congress, and significantly foreshadowed one of its most memorable

acts by introducing "a bill to regulate the elective franchise in the District of Columbia."

The Senate signified its willingness to enter at once upon active duty by giving unanimous consent to Mr. Sumner, Senator from Massachusetts, to introduce a number of important bills. The measures thus brought before the Senate were clearly indicative of the line of policy which Congress would pursue. The bills introduced were designed "to carry out the principles of a republican form of government in the District of Columbia;" "to present an oath to maintain a republican form of government in the rebel States;" "to enforce the amendment to the Constitution abolishing slavery;" "to enforce the guarantee of a republican form of government in certain States where governments have been usurped or overthrown."

Senator Wilson, of Massachusetts, was not behind his distinguished colleague in his readiness to enter upon the most laborious legislation of the session. He introduced "a bill to maintain the freedom of the inhabitants in the States declared in insurrection by the proclamation of the President on the first of July, 1862."

Senator Harris, of New York, long known as one of the ablest jurists of his State, and recently an eminent member of the Senate's Judiciary Committee, directed attention to his favorite field of legislative labor by introducing "a bill to reorganize the Judiciary of the United States."

While the Senate was thus actively entering upon the labors of the session, a somewhat different scene was transpiring in the other end of the Capitol.

Long before the hour for the assembling of Congress, the halls, the galleries, and corridors of the House of Representatives were thronged with such crowds as had never before been seen at the opening of a session. The absorbing interest felt throughout the entire country in the great questions to be decided by Congress had drawn great numbers to the Capitol from every quarter of the Union. Eligible positions, usually held in reserve for certain privileged or official persons, and rarely occupied by a spectator, were now filled to their utmost capacity. The Diplomatic Gallery was occupied by many unskilled in the mysteries of diplomacy; the Reporters' Gallery held many listeners and lookers on who had no connection with newspapers, save as readers. The "floor" was held not only by the "members," who made the hall vocal with their greetings and congratulations, but by a great crowd of pages, office-seekers, office-holders, and unambitious citizens, who thronged over the new carpet and among the desks.

The hour having arrived for the assembling of Congress, Edward McPherson, Clerk of the last House of Representatives, brought down the gavel on the Speaker's desk, and called the House to order. The members found their seats, and the crowd surged back up the aisles, and stood in a compact mass in the rear of the last row of desks.

Edward McPherson, who at that moment occupied the most prominent and responsible place in the nation, had come to his position through a series of steps, which afforded the country an opportunity of knowing his material and capacity. A graduate of Pennsylvania College in 1848,

editor, author, twice a Congressman, and Clerk of the House of Representatives in the Thirty-eighth Congress, he had given evidence that he was reliable. Having shown himself a thoroughly conscientious man in the performance of all his public duties, the great interests of the nation were safe in his hands.

The country had been greatly concerned to know how the Clerk would make up the Roll of the House, and whether the names of members elect from the late rebellious States would be called at the opening of the session. If this should be done, the first step would be gained by the Representatives of those States toward holding seats in Congress to which the majority at the North considered them not entitled. It had even been intimated that the color of constitutionality which they would gain from recognition by the Clerk would be used to justify an assertion of their claims by force. What the Clerk would do, as master of the rolls and presiding officer of the House, was not long in doubt.

The Clerk proceeded to call the roll of Representatives elect, while the subordinates at the desk took note of the responses. He called the names of Congressmen from the States of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, and so forth, in a certain order which had been customary time immemorial in naming the States. In this order Tennessee had place after Kentucky and before Indiana. When the name of the last Representative from Kentucky had been called, the decisive moment arrived. The delegation from Tennessee were on the floor, ready to answer to their names. The Clerk passed over Tennessee