Altoona Tribune.

ALTOONA, PA.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 2, 1862.

The Mason and Slidell Affair.

Well, we are not to have a rupture with England at present. The Trent affair has been amicably adjusted and Messrs. Mason and Slidell, and their clerks, are to be given up to England. We have not time to carefully read all the correspondence, but we can say that it was conducted in a calm and friendly manner. Commander Wilkes did a great thing in arresting Mason and Slidell, and thus for a time preventing them from doing any injury to the cause of the Union, or anything for the Southern Confederacy; but, from the time we read the opinions of the London *Times* upon the seizure, we had an idea of the ground upon which the British Government would base its demand for their delivery, and we had a doubt as to whether Capt. Wilkes did his whole duty in not seizing the Trent and bringing passengers, cargo and vessel into port, and settling the matter in the usual way.

In adjusting the difficulty, our Government claimed that the seizure was not directed by it, and that no insult was intended. Earl Russell, through Lord Lyons, recited the facts of the seizure, as reported to the British Government, asserting that it was considered an aggression and an outrage upon the British flag, and hoped that our Government would, of its own motion, make redress, by liberating the persons seized and making a suitable apology. Mr. Seward's answer corrects Earl Russell's statement in regard to important facts, and discusses the question in a calm, temperate, forcible and statesmanlike manner. The French Secretary of State, through the French Minister at Washington, earnestly urged that our Government should yield to the rational demands of England. Secretary Seward's state paper is drawn up in admirable temper, in complete accordance with diplomatic usage, is tersely, forcibly and elegantly expressed, and, however much the conclusions arrived at will disappoint numbers, must universally be received, *per se*, as one of the ablest and most dignified state paper which has ever emanated from his department. He thoroughly discusses the whole international question raised by the late seizure, as a lawyer and on its legal merits, and the conclusion, which must have been arrived at with great reluctance, is expressed with dignity and without apparent chagrin. If his argument is sound, and the surrender of the four rebels in our possession is in accordance with the law of nations, and more especially with those liberal principles regarding neutrals for which this country has for many years earnestly and consistently contended, the nation will doubtless submit to the decision with as good a grace as possible under the circumstances.

We may be allowed to say that we rejoice that we have honorably escaped, at this time, from a war with so great a naval power as England.—While we have men—in millions, we may say—who are ready and willing to take up arms against this old enemy, we must admit that the arms and ammunition with which to fit them out is not at this moment at our command, although it would take but a short time to get all things in readiness.

England has taken advantage of our present distracted condition, and plainly shown that she is not our friend. For the present it is our best policy to keep free from all foreign complications. Let us, once and forever, crush the spirit of rebellion in our own land, and then we shall be able to attend to and resist the arrogant demands of a jealous and twice-whipped enemy. Let England boast now, if she will; our cause will not suffer by delay; and the day may not be far distant when she will be paid with interest. It is sufficient for us to know that in surrendering the arch-traitors—Mason and Slidell—our honor as a nation has not been compromised, and that such action on our part was urged by other great and respectable powers. Let the traitors go; their pinions have been clipped, and we have now no fears that they can do us injury abroad. Their plans are known and can be overthrown. May they never again set foot on American soil, is our ardent prayer.

SUSPENSION OF SPECIE PAYMENT.—All the banks in the Eastern cities suspended specie payment on or about the first of January, and, as a consequence, nearly all country banks will be compelled to do the same. If we are rightly informed this suspension is not the result of any weakness on the part of the banks, but to better enable them to furnish the government with specie to meet its liabilities. As a general thing the banks of the country never were in better condition, and although this action may subject business men to a little inconvenience for a time, they should submit to it quietly in order that the credit of the government may be fully sustained.

☞ The *Student and Schoolmate*, published by Galen James & Co., 15 Cornhill, Boston, is one of the best publications which parents can place in the hands of their children, and would be a most fitting New Year's present. It contains much that will interest, amuse and instruct the young, and is furnished at such a low price, $1,00 per annum, that it comes within the reach of all. To clubs 10 copies are furnished for $6,00, or 50 copies for $25,60. If a number of our boys and girls were to canvass a little they might easily raise a club of fifty in this place.

TRULY A COMPLIMENT.—The *Philadelphia Evening Journal*, a few days since, in referring to the approaching session of the Legislature of this State and the organization of the Senate, paid the following well merited compliment to the Senator from this district:

The selection of Hon. Louis W. Hall, of Blair county, as speaker appears to be generally conceded. He is unquestionably a gentleman of ability; kind and affable in his manners, and, as a rare point in these degenerate days, his unswerving integrity is acknowledged by men of all parties.

Our Army Correspondence.

ON BOARD U. S. STEAMER ILLINOIS,
Off Hilton Head, S. C., Dec. 10th, 1861.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—I suppose your readers are all aware of the fact that the destination of the 76th Regiment P. V., was Port Royal, S. C. At all events, such was the case; and, on Thursday last, the regiment, which had for two weeks past been encamped at Camp Hamilton, near Fortress Monroe, went on board the steam transport Illinois, to proceed to Port Royal. The embarkation was conducted slowly, but in good order. All the baggage had to be taken on board a small steamer and conveyed to the Illinois, which lay out in the centre of the stream. After the baggage was all shipped, the troops began to embark, and by 8 P. M. the whole regiment, together with three companies of Col. Welsh's 45th Regt. P. V., were safely quartered on board. The men were all supplied with bunks—each company being quartered by itself. The Illinois is a splendid steamer; she was built for the California trade, but is now in the employ of the Government. She is 293 feet long by 42 in width, and, when loaded, draws 18 feet of water. She has ample accommodations for 1500 men, and has arrangements for cooking for the same number. All things being in readiness on Friday morning, the anchor was weighed, and by 9 A. M. we were slowly steaming out of Hampton Roads. By 2 P. M. we had cleared the Capes and were fairly out on the broad at Atlantic. By sunset we were entirely out of sight of land, and for the first time viewed a sunset at sea. All that has ever been written about the beauties of such a scene falls far short of reality. The same beautiful spectacle was witnessed the next morning at sunrise, and was viewed by all on board, with mingled wonder and admiration. On Friday night we were hailed by the U. S. gunboat Monticello, bound for Hampton Roads. Nothing worthy of note occurred until we arrived off Hilton Head. The ocean remained comparatively smooth during our voyage, and very few cases of sea-sickness occurred, which is much to be wondered at, as many of those on board had never been on salt water before. On Sunday evening we arrived off Hilton Head and endeavored to pass up the Channel. After going about a mile, we ran aground in 18 feet of water; and then commenced a series of very unpleasant thumping and bumping which rendered the vessel anything but comfortable.—This really dangerous state of affairs lasted until 10 P. M. when the vessel was finally gotten off and anchored in 24 feet of water. On Monday morning the anchors were raised and we stood up the channel. By noon we anchored safely opposite Fort Walker, where we are at the present time. We have not received orders to go ashore, but expect them to-day. The members of Captain Wayne's Company are all well and in fine spirits. It is now time for the mail to close, and I will end this hastily written letter by suggesting to all who have friends in the 76th to enclose a few postage-stamps in each letter they may write, as it is almost impossible to get them here. Excuse the haste with which this letter is written, as it is no easy task to write a corrected letter on board a vessel containing 1100 persons.

KEYSTONE.

HILTON HEAD, S. C.,
December 18th, 1861.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—I again seat myself to give you a few notes of our doings on this sandy island. In my last I described to you our trip from Fortress Monroe until the time when we cast anchor in the harbor of Port Royal.

After remaining on board the Illinois until Wednesday morning, we went on shore, effecting our landing in surf-boats, which carried us smoothly and pleasantly to the beach. On reaching the shore we were rather unfavorably impressed with the appearance of things generally. Before us was a gently sloping beach, on which the surf was constantly dashing, and beyond it a steep bank of sand about ten feet high. On that part of the beach which was unswept by the surf, numbers of men were rapidly passing backward and forward, teams rushing along, drivers shouting, boatmen swearing, and occasionally an officer riding on a diminutive looking animal which was called a "secesh horse," but which we could scarcely refrain from looking upon as an *overgrown rat!* All sorts of work seemed to be going on. Here was a party filling old barrels with sand, and sinking them on the prolongation of a rude looking wharf which was being rapidly extended into the stream. By the way, there are at present two of the "old whalers," of which so much has been said in the papers, lying in the harbor, which are intended to be sunk in the water, and on them the end of the wharf is to rest. When our regiment was all landed we shouldered our knapsacks and marched off to our camping-ground, which was nearly a mile from the place of landing.

It is not necessary that I should repeat to you all that occurred in the next two days; suffice it to say that we finally succeeded in getting comfortably quartered in the sand. Hilton Head Island, on which we are located, is a low, sandy tract, being one of the many sea-coast islands on which the famous "sea-island cotton" is grown. It is about 17 miles long and 8 miles wide. On the Northern end of it is Fort Walker, which was captured by our fleet. The Fort has now been put in good condition; several new guns have been mounted, and everything put in admirable working order. It is now garrisoned by a Rhode Island regiment, which is being constantly drilled in the use and handling of the heavy guns. In the meantime, large working parties have been detailed from the different regiments to erect other fortifications which are now in progress of construction. They consist of a continuous line of earthworks, which extend from a point about a mile from Fort Walker to the Southward, in a semi-circular direction across the island, to a point on Broad river about the same distance North-Westward from the Fort. They are very heavy—for the most part consisting of an embankment about twelve feet high, protected on the outside by a ditch eight feet deep and twelve feet wide. On the outside of the ditch is another embankment much lower than the first, and sloping gradually backward so that it can be raked at all points by the fire of the heavy guns which are being placed on the parapet of the main embankment. When these works are completed and the new guns which are now here are mounted, it will not be an easy point to capture. The main depots for provisions and ammunition for the troops acting on the Southern coast, are all being erected inside of this entrenchment, and it seems to be the purpose of the Government to make this a permanent, fortified post. This becomes more evident from the fact that many of the vessels of the "stone fleet" are being sunk in the channels leading to Charleston and Savannah, by which those harbors will be forever rendered useless for commercial purposes. This harbor has many advantages over those mentioned, having a greater depth of water at low tide, is easier of access, affords a safer refuge from storm, and is more in the centre of the great cotton producing portion of the South. Arrangements have already been made to have the cotton which has been left by the planters, in their haste to get away from the "Yankees," properly secured and prepared for shipment. Thousands, I may safely say millions, of dollars worth of cotton can be collected within forty miles of this port, and the most of it is already in the hands of the Government. Even on this island there are acres upon acres of cotton yet remaining unpicked. The entrenchments, upon which five hundred men of our regiment work daily, runs directly through an extensive cotton-field, and Gen. Vicles' whole brigade is encamped in a field from which the cotton had not been picked, and the crop of which is now almost entirely destroyed.

The health of our regiment is very good, and the men all seem delighted with their position.—The weather is very warm, and we can hardly realize that while our friends at home are enjoying their sleigh-rides, or sitting around their comfortable firesides, with the wind whistling fiercely around them, we hardly ever require a coat or feel a blast of cold air. In fact, the days are what we would call hot, for, in the middle of the day, it requires but little exercise to makes us perspire freely.

I wish you could be here and see a specimen of the full-blooded African, such as we see here every day. They come into camp with their heads and feet bare—indeed, I think some of them would not know what a pair of shoes or a hat is for! It is amusing to hear them describe the bombardment of Fort Walker. One of them, when asked about it, said: "De hard balls didn't matter, but when de checkered boat (the Wabash) came up an' trow'd dem rotten balls, (shells,) massa couldn't stan' it an' had to run!" These negroes bring in great hoe-cakes, and a kind of cake made of sweet potatoes and corn, which is very palatable but awful black. They also bring us fine sweet potatoes and splendid oysters; so you may imagine we live well. Sweet potatoes are as plenty here as Irish potatoes are at home.

I believe we can claim to be the only regiment which has passed South of the Potomac without being armed. In fact, when we first landed, we were called "the harmless Seventy-Sixth!" But the tune is changed now. Since we came here we have received our arms. They are splendid Enfield rifles, with the thrust bayonet, and with sights arranged for from one to nine hundred yards.

Palmetto trees abound, and great quantities of sweet-brier, out of which pipes are made, can be gathered anywhere on the island. Almost every man in the regiment has his sweet-brier pipe, made from the natural root.

We have not received a mail since we have been on the island, and many of us are anxious to hear from home. Let this remark stimulate our friends to write often; and, if they do, they will have the pleasure of knowing that they thereby remove one of the greatest anxieties with which the mind of a soldier far from home is burdened. More anon.

KEYSTONE.

U. S. ARMY, *near Falls Village, Va.*,
December 22d, 1861.

MESSRS. MCCRUM & DERN:—*Gentlemen*—The holidays are fast approaching, and how little do many of us—soldiers especially—heed the fact that ere another Christmas holiday or New Year's festivity rolls around, bringing with it happiness and comfort to some, and privation and misery to many others, many of us, now in the prime and full vigor of health, may be called forth to try the stern realities of a future state! Yes, gentlemen, this is a fact truthfully apparent to the minds of all, and yet how few there are who pause, for even a moment, amid the busy cares of life, to contemplate the fearful realities of after death! But these are thoughts not in consonance with the life of a soldier; and, as I inherit and hope I merit that title, I shall cease writing in such a strain.

We are still enveloped in the somewhat usual monotony of camp life—occasionally relieved, however, from this monotonous stupor by stirring reports and rumors from abroad, all of which contribute their share, and make up the life of the soldier. Since we have received our Zouave dress, our time has generally been employed in fixing up and arranging our camp. From the small square tent we have changed to the large round one, of French manufacture. You must remember, gentlemen, that we are now a French regiment, doing everything according to the French style.—These tents are arranged so as to contain sixteen men—allowing six tents for each company, besides two for the officers. A pole stands in the centre, around which are suspended the guns and belts. At the top there is a ventilator, and at each side a door. They are sufficiently large to contain sixteen men, yet they wofully lack the comfort and convenience of the smaller ones. Before the change we enjoyed the comfort of a warm fire to each tent, but now we must endure the cold as best we may. It is, indeed, a sorry change to your humble servant. We have very tastefully arranged our camp by erecting arches covered with evergreen, and planting pine trees in and about the entire camp. The encampment is so arranged that a street about 18 feet wide is formed between two companies; and at the end of each street an arch is erected, with the letter of the company tastefully arranged in the centre. Companies L and M are situated in the front of the camp, on a line parallel with it, and about 150 feet from the rest of the camp. This interval is handsomely decorated with pines, and here the regiment is formed in line previous to our departure for drill, and on dress parade. Taken altogether, I think we have the most tastefully arranged camp on this side of the Potomac.

On Saturday last, the 18th inst., our regiment went out to Hall's Hill, and participated in a grand review of Gen. Porter's Division, on which occasion the 62d and 83d Pennsylvania regiments were each presented with a beautiful banner. The presentation, I am told, was made by Hon S. Cameron, and briefly yet eloquently responded to by Colonel Black. The different regiments turned out largely and presented a fine appearance. The bold 62d, under Col. Black, were highly complimented while passing in review before the General. As we passed by him he looked calmly and apparently interestedly upon the regiment, then turning to one of his aids, remarked—"There goes a solid regiment!" And I have been told by several who were standing among the crowd of spectators, that Col. Black's regiment was the subject of universal admiration. I think we were well tried that day, too, for we were engaged on that field during the entire day—only returning to camp after dark in the evening. I have heretofore endeavored to refrain from self-praise, but really I feel that justice demands of me to say that Company M (notwithstanding the adverse circumstances under which they labored on this occasion,) acquitted themselves admirably. Our first officers have been unwell for some time past, but at the review they appeared to excellent advantage, inspiring us all with renewed vigor and a determination to succeed; and we did succeed, to the evident satisfaction of every man in the ranks—receiving the compliments of the assembled multitude of spectators, and, above all, the approbation of the Commander-in-Chief!

Well, gentlemen, we still remain in a state of "masterly inactivity," so far as relates to connection with the enemy. Our only hope of a collision with them is the prospect afforded us while engaged on picket. Our turn for this duty came around a few days ago, but in consequence of the flag presentation it was deferred, and now I suppose we will spend our Christmas on the frontiers, engaged in the important duty of watching some of Jeff Davis' minions. It seems that the rebels dare not present a full front, and we can only depend upon circumstances to effect an encounter with them. More anon.

Yours respectfully, BLAIN.

ON PICKET, 5 miles from Camp,
December 25th, 1861.

GENTLEMEN:—Well, here we are, this bright Christmas morning, enjoying ourselves as only a picket-guard can. It is not so bad either, when we take into consideration the fact that many a man, as good and patriotic as any of us, often had no better. Here we have nice wheat bread—that is, some of us—and others have large square crackers. The most of us have some meat—cold boiled beef—and coffee. Said coffee is either hot or cold—altogether suited to our fastidious tastes; neither is it sufficiently strong to effect our nervous system. Should it unfortunately exceed in strength to suit a more temperate member of our company, he is aware of his privilege to introduce a sufficient quantity of the *aequius* fluid which courses along the bottom of the hill. Then, by way of a Christmas dinner, we have an ample sufficiency of bread and crackers, with a little coffee, or plenty of water. This, gentlemen, constitutes *our* Christmas entertainment, besides dodging and stopping rebel bullets—but this, you may rest assured, is extremely rare.

Who of us, one year ago, would for a moment have entertained the thought that on the 25th day of December, 1861, we should be enjoying such chilling entertainment in the wilds of Virginia? But such is life, truthfully portraying the following from Shakspeare's Hamlet:

"Now let the stricken deer go weep,
The heart ungalled play,
For some must laugh while others weep;
So runs the world away."

Perhaps the quotation is not strictly correct, but I am sure the sentiment is. Taken altogether, our situation here is somewhat interesting—being a slight improvement on the usual monotony of the camp. Our company is stationed, by way of reserve, at an old dilapidated house, which was formerly occupied by a *Craven* Ashford, who, on the breaking out of the war, entered the rebel service, leaving an old negro and negress, with five pickaninnies. We keep close watch over *them*, deploying the rest out along the usual picket line, relieving them every two hours. Your humble servant is engaged in the laudable occupation of keeping close watch over the movements of a family consisting of one man and three ladies.—The corporal who has just relieved me, says one (the youngest) is pretty; but you know, gentlemen, tastes differ widely sometimes, and so it is in this instance.

Yours, &c., BLAIN.

RELEASE OF MASON & SLIDELL.—A dispatch from Boston, dated January 1st, 1862, says: The steam-tug Starlight left Fort Warren at eleven o'clock this morning, with Mason and Slidell and their secretaries, for Provincetown, where they will be transferred to the British war-steamer, Rinaldo, now lying there. The commander of this vessel says he has been ordered to remain there; and he is, accordingly, preparing to make himself at home. The vessel carries sixteen guns, and arrived at Provincetown on Tuesday night last.

THE BATTLE OF DRAINESVILLE.—Gen. McCall Gen. Ord, Lieut. Col. Kane, and Capt. Easton, have all handed in official reports of the late battle. McCall regrets that the list of wounded is greater than first reported, and puts down our loss at seven killed, sixty-one wounded, including one Lieutenant and four captains, and three missing. The enemy's loss he puts down, at the lowest estimate, as ninety left dead on the field.

THE WAR IN MISSOURI.—*Otterville, Mo.*, Dec. 31.—One of our men, captured by the rebels near Clinton, and carried to Springfield, has just returned, having left that place on Christmas. He says Gen. Price, with 8,000 men, had taken all the houses in Springfield for the use of his troops, turning women and children into the streets. He had unloaded his wagons, and was preparing for a long stay.

The people of Arkansas had refused to allow Price to enter that State with any other troops than those regularly enlisted in the Confederate service. His force included only 1500 men so enrolled. The country about Springfield was full of men returning from Price's army, who said if they were permitted to return home and take the oath of allegiance, Price would be left with only his regular Confederate troops.

Since General Pope's rapid operations of last week, there is quiet in all the region between the Missouri and Osage rivers. Not a rumor of rebel camps or squads has been heard.

HEAVY ORDNANCE ORDERED.—On Tuesday an order went from the Ordnance Department to the three largest cannon founderies in the country—the Fort Pitt in Pittsburg, and Alger's in Boston—to manufacture, to their utmost capacity, 10 inch columbiads for the next twelve months. Their present make would in that time yeild eighteen hundred guns. Contracts for immense quantities of small ordnance, arms, and shot, and shells have also recently been made.

THE BRITISH SOLDIERS IN PORTLAND.—Permission has been given in a very courteous manner, to pass the British troops through Maine into Canada. As the navigation of the St. Lawrence is closed, and the transport of troops inland from Halifax to Canada, in midwinter, would be expensive, tedious, and hazardous, England will appreciate this courtesy as one of extraordinary importance.

The Victory at Drainesville.

Gallant Conduct of the Men of Pennsylvania.

General McCall, learning that a rebel squad of about one hundred cavalry were foraging around near Difficult creek, and coming within four miles of his line, he determined to capture them or drive them off, and at the same time secure a quantity of forage belonging to some noted rebels at Drainesville.

On Friday night he ordered out General Ord's Brigade, with one day's rations to start at daylight. He also took Easton's battery and four squadrons of cavalry and forty-five wagons in charge of Capt. Hall. He started them on with instructions to secure the forage, and after they left he heard that there were some rebels near Herndon's station, on the railroad, who might give them trouble, and knowing General Ord's disposition for fighting so well, he ordered out General Reynolds' Brigade, as a reserve, on the turnpike, and with his staff galloped on towards Drainesville.

In the meantime, General Ord had marched to Drainesville, and with his troops in the following order:—Advance guard, Kane Rifles, Easton's battery, four squadrons of the First Pennsylvania Cavalry, with the Tenth, Sixth and Twelfth Regiments. The regiments were about one hundred rods apart, and as the skirmishers of the Ninth were scouring the woods this side of Drainesville, as their regiment was entering the village they found the rebels secreted in the woods. Loose firing at once commenced. It was now about half-past one, P. M.

Gen. Ord, who was in advance, at once rode to the spot where the firing commenced, and drew up his troops in line of battle. Easton's battery took up their position in front of Thorn's house, and Companies A and N of the Kane Rifles were deployed down the road running to Centreville.—When about five hundred yards down seven squadrons of Stuart's Cavalry galloped from one field to another in front, as though they were retreating, fearing we were coming down on them in force.

The Rifles halted for fear of being entrapped, when bang went a cannon in front, not a hundred yards off, and a shot from a rifled cannon whizzed over their heads and took the top off a house where Easton's battery was located. The Rifles dropped down on their faces, and the Kentucky riflemen opened a volley upon them. They fell back and were reinforced by other of their companies and then opened a firing whenever they could see a chance.

Easton now opened on them with three guns—twenty-four and one twelve—sending his other round to the hill to keep them from out-flanking them. Their six guns were then pouring out incessant fire, and the Sixth Regiment on his right were firing rapidly at the edge of the woods, where the rebels were concealed in thick vines. The rebel cannon shot nearly all went over their heads.

When the position of the rebel battery was found out pretty certain, Easton let drive, and his third shell exploded in the caisson of the rebels, which went off with a terrible noise. Just then Gen. McCall and his staff rode up, and he took command. He complimented Gen. Ord on the disposition of the forces, and then proceeded to give orders.

One of the regiments was disposed to fall back out of the field in which they had been placed to get under cover, *a la* rebels. General McCall rode up flourishing his sword, and cried out to them to "Forward, boys! stand your ground." The rebels now saw their chance, and down from the extreme left came a regiment in light blue overcoats, with the Stars and Stripes waving over them.

One of the officers cried out, "Do not shoot, we are Bucktails." Our men consequently reserved their fire, until one of the officers cried out "it's a lie, give them h—l, boys." Before the word died away, however, the rebels fired and started for cover. Our troops gave them a volley with fearful effect, their balls nearly all passed over the heads of our men.

The artillery were now throwing their shells into the woods. The rebels had ceased firing from their battery, and were trying to get their men to make a charge but without success. The hail of lead which now rained was terrible. "Charge bayonets on 'em, boys!" cried General McCall, and his aids galloped around with orders to move onward.

The General, Ord, and his aids, were at the head of his column and charged in the following order:

The 9th Pennsylvania Reserve Regiment, Col. Jackson; Kane Rifles, Lieutenant Colonel Kane; and a part of the Sixth Regiment in reserve, with the Tenth and Twelfth Regiments on both wings.

On they went, plunged into the woods, and the rebels fled. They fired as fast as they could load, and in forty-five minutes from the time the rebels opened fire on us they were in full retreat. Down went guns, rifles, overcoats, and every thing that would encounter their running.

The woods presented a fearful spectacle, dead and dying lying in heaps, and mangled bodies of horses being side by side with their riders. Near the ruins of the battery were seven horses and thirteen men piled up together. The groans of dying men and shrieks of the wounded were fearful and terrific. Blended with them were the shouts of our victorious soldiers. The men stopped to select some trophies, including swords, officers' caps, belts, money, &c.

General McCall determined to keep up the retreat and followed the enemy for a mile with part of the two regiments, including in all about seventeen hundred men. In the road and fields were wagon loads of clothes and muskets.

The rout of the enemy was total and complete, and was more disastrous and disgraceful to them than any that we have known in the whole war.

Two officers were selected to count the dead bodies of the rebels lying in their tracks. The principal portion of the killed were around the position of their battery and in the route of their retreat, they being *shot in the back*.

One officer counted over a hundred dead bodies.

All their wounded who could walk or run got away, as well as most of their wounded in the early part of the fight.

The distance between the two batteries was about six hundred yards. The rebels lost nine horses from their battery. Captain Easton fired, in the very short time during which the engagement continued, nearly two hundred shell, and had only thirty-six men to man his guns, not one of whom was lost. His horses stood fire with as much composure as though they had been old veterans.

The Rebel forces consisted of seven companies of Stuart's Cavalry; Cutt's Battery of four guns; Tenth Alabama, Colonel J. H. Forney; First Kentucky, Colonel Taylor, (killed)—seven hundred—the Sixth South Carolina and one North Carolina Regiment. The South Carolina Regiment has been at a station on the Leesburg Railroad for a day or two. It was them who first opened upon us, and they were the first to run.

Two caissons were left in the field, and we, not having horses to bring them in, had to cut them up with axes. The boxes were, however, brought away by Captain Easton, who now has them in camp. We learn from one of the rebel prisoners that the battery was Captain Cutts' Georgia battery, and they had one sixteen-pounder Parrott and three twenty-four pound howitzers.

The Kentucky men say that there is much dissatisfaction in their regiment, and declare they want to go home at the earliest moment. They say that theirs is the only regiment from Kentucky in the army of the Potomac. They left Centreville about three A. M. on Friday morning with the Alabama battery, cavalry, and one other regiment in the rear.

An officer stated that Gen. Johnston had left Centreville with ten thousand men, and come on four miles, where he waited to hear the result.—These men were but ten miles off during the engagement.

Easton's battery was raisod about Chambersburg, by Captain Charles Campbell, who was afterwards chosen Colonel, and they deserve great praise for the cool and unflinching manner in which they fired, and for the deadly aim with which each piece was fired.

This was merely a small expidition of General McCall's, sent out without the knowledge of Gen. McClellan. When he heard of it, he rode over to Miner's Hill, and got a large force under marching orders. Gen. Hancock's brigade was ordered out, Gen. Meade's brigade left camp at Tenallytown about two p. m. and marched within two miles of the field, when orders came to return.

Their confidence now in their leaders is unbounded; and should General McCall ever lead they will follow without faltering, even though they were walking into their graves. This is the first victory we have won on the Potomac for the rapidity with which it was executed and the completedness of the victory, without any loss of life compared to that of the enemy; and too much praise cannot be accorded to the officers for the management, and the men for executing the commands.

If the rebel loss is as great in wounded as it is in dead, it is over four hundred in killed and wounded. The proportion is always four or five to one killed, and we know of about a hundred killed.

Later News from Europe.

Continued Warlike Preparations.

NEW YORK, Dec. 31.—The steamer *Etna* arrived at 8 o'clock this morning, with dates by telegraph from London to the 19th.

The message of President Lincoln claimed great attention notwithstanding that the feeling was deeply engrossed with the death of Prince Albert. The silence of the President's message on the Trent affair was the subject of much conjecture and comment. It was generally regarded as a loophole for escape, and gave some hopes of peace, although the general construction was warlike.

The London *Times* says that nothing can be more ungracious than the President's treatment of foreign Powers for their forbearance. A gracious and courteous acknowledgment was due. The *Times* also devotes an article to the report of the Secretary of the Navy, which it treats with ridicule and denounces as an unparalleled crime the proposal of blocking up ports by sunken vessels.

The *Post* treats the message as undeniably warlike, and, although remarking on the silence relative to the *Trent* affair, says it was scarcely within the ordinary scope of a message. It also charges the President with ingratitude in dealing with the maritime Powers. In the same article it says that the despatch to Lord Lyons was simple and final—it is an ultimatum in itself.

The *Daily News* considers the silence on the *Trent* affair an abdication of prudence and caution and favorable to peace. It is pleased to believe that the President desired to hold himself free to speak at an appropriate time. It nevertheless complains of the President's silence, and of the little credit he gives to foreign Governments.

The *Star* justifies the silence relative to the *Trent*, and praises the clearness, force, and aiding of the message.

The *Herald* takes quite a contrary view, and fears that peace is almost hopeless. The vote of thanks by Congress it regards as an insult to England.

The warlike preparations are continued. The *Persia* took out nearly 1,200 troops. The Grenadier and Scots' Fusilier Guards would embark immediately. All the disposable vessels in the Mediterranean were assembling at Gibraltar, to be ready for immediate departure. Admiral Dacres has been appointed second in command to Admiral Milne.

The war risks at Lloyd's were active and advancing.

Parliament meet about the middle of January.

The death of Prince Albert had caused a most profound sensation. There is great sympathy for the Queen, who bore the bereavement with much fortitude. The warmest eulogiums are passed upon the Prince.

Strong tokens of sympathy are tendered from the French and other continental courts, many of which went immediately into mourning.

Lord Palmerston has been ill from gout, but was better.

The *Asia's* news was generally regarded at Paris as unfavorable for peace. The leading journals continue to advocate French neutrality.

LONDON, Dec. 19.—A rumor was current at Paris yesterday that the French Government had sent a note to Russia, Prussia, and Austria suggesting a common mediation of the great Powers between England and America. The *Herald* correspondent observes that the tender of such mediation would be a menace, and be rejected on that very ground.

The Efficiency of Rifled Cannon.

Col. Brown, in his report of the attack by Fort Pickens upon the rebel batteries, says that Fort Pickens at the conclusion of the fight is in every respect, save the disabling of one gun carriage and the loss of service of six men, as efficient as it was at the commencement of the combat. He silenced McRea and one or two other batteries, and reduced the fire of Barrancas, besides destroying the town of Warrington and injuring the rebel steamers. The conclusions he comes to from the bombardment are that brick or stone walls, at a distance of 2,000 to 3,000 yards, cannot be seriously injured by the most efficient guns, unless rifled.—That shell and shot cannot fire a slate roof building, and are not to be depended upon at all for firing wooden buildings, unless the shells are filled with incendiary composition; that sandbags are great protection to life, that small gun-boats, drawing six feet of water and armed with rifled guns are of more service than a forty-gun ship, and that parrot's rifled gun is much better than James'. This efficiency of rifled guns over smooth bore has been demonstrated repeatedly, and every vessel in the service ought to be provided with some of these weapons. The moment the rebels at Fort McRea got their rifled guns to bear upon the Richmond, she had to abandon the contest or be cut to pieces. If she had been supplied with the same kind of ordnance she would have done much more mischief. All the new gun-boats, we believe, are supplied with rifled cannon, which will make them more formidable in any future operations against the rebel fortifications.

Shipments of Arms from Europe.

The Hamburg steamer Tuctonia, which arrived at New York on Tuesday, brought over seventy-five thousand stand of arms, principally rifles for the government. The arms are of various kinds; a few of them are old muskets, but nearly all are new and excellent. The largest proportion of this shipment was procured in Austria. The arms are consigned to many different houses.

The steamship Hansa, of the Bremen line, also brings to this port a cargo quite as large—a portion of them from France and England.

The steamer Damascus recently from Liverpool, is now discharging a quantity of arms and lead.—Of the former there are only a few thousand stand—less than five; but there are one hundred casks of ingot lead, each cask weighing fourteen to fifteen hundred pounds.

It is estimated that nearly a quarter of a million stand of arms have been brought to this country during the last four months by the Hamburg line of steamships. Besides these, a large amount of war material, including infantry and infantry equipments, have been imported from Europe.

The Bremen line, which has kept up a monthly communication, has of course, though some of the cargoes have been very large, brought a less number. But during the four or five months past, it has undoubtedly brought a hundred and fifty thousand stand, besides equipments.

A NEW CURE.—A singular addition to chiropodic science has been made in the Guthrie Gray regiment, in service in Western Virginia, where they were for weeks at a time with wet feet.—Their feet had been so thoroughly soaked that every corn and bunion in the regiment was killed. We mention this curious fact for the benefit of those troubled in this manner, and hope that every man so afflicted will immediately enlist.

☞ It is estimated by the packages received by Adams' Express and through other sources, that at least five thousand *roasted turkeys* were sent to the soldiers of the Potomac during the holidays.