



ALTOONA, PA. WEDNESDAY, DEC. 9, 1863.

Having secured additional help, we are enabled to issue our paper on time this week. We shall endeavor to be more punctual in future.

Organisation of Congress.

Congress met on Monday last and organized by electing Schuyler Colfax, of Indiana, Speaker, on first ballot. An effort was made by Emerson Ethridge, clerk, to prevent the organization of the House by the majority, by attempting to rule out the members elect from several States, in consequence of alleged informalities in their certificates. This matter was soon disposed of by those who were admitted, by a vote admitting all who presented credentials properly authenticated as heretofore. The majority for Colfax, for Speaker, was twenty. The President's message would be read and given to the public on Tuesday.

CAPTURE OF GEN. MEAGHER.—Gen. Meagher, who was with the army as a visitor to his old brigade, was captured in citizen's clothes, near Mine run, during the recent engagement, and is now in the hands of the enemy.

Attempt to Surprise Gen. Burnside.

A special despatch to the Louisville Journal says that Gen. Wilcox has telegraphed from Gen. Burnside's headquarters, at Knoxville, the following:—

At eleven o'clock on the evening of the 28th, the Rebels attempted to surprise his force, and succeeded in driving our skirmishing line of the right wing, which was posted on the Kingston road, and forced it back to Fort Saunders.

We afterwards regained our position, and had skirmishing with the enemy all night. On Sunday morning at seven o'clock the Rebels moved a force of three brigades against Fort Saunders, a portion of which, notwithstanding our heavy fire, gained the ditch, but could not ascend the parapet.

We took three hundred prisoners and three standards of colors. The Rebel loss in killed and wounded was over three hundred, while our loss was about twenty.

Longest then accepted Gen. Burnside's offer for a cessation of hostilities to enable the Rebels to attend to their wounded.

The wounded soldiers were exchanged for loyal soldiers wounded in previous engagements, and the Rebel dead removed from our lines.

Colonel Rice, commanding the assaulting party, Colonel McElroy and Lieutenant-Colonel Thompson, of the enemy, were killed.

An assault was simultaneously made on the right of our line, but the Rebels were driven back.

Our loss on that side was about forty, while the enemy's loss was much greater.

Our supplies are ample for the present. The Rebels have been reinforced by one or two regiments of Beauregard's army.

A correspondent of the Cincinnati Gazette, writing from Knoxville on the 29th ult., says:—

The great rebel blow, anxiously anticipated so long, was struck this morning. Reinforced by the troops of Sam. Jones, Jackson and Williams, Gen. Longstreet sought to annihilate the Army of the Ohio by a single blow; for which purpose he selected seven picked regiments. Skirmishing commenced last night at ten, and continued sharply until near daylight on our left front, before Fort Saunders, commanded by Gen. Ferrer, and defended by the 79th New York, Benjamin's 3d U. S. artillery, and Buckley's Rhode Island battery.

Our pickets were driven in, and the enemy had possession themselves of some rifle-pits, but the Massachusetts boys drove them back. Suddenly the rebel storming party, led by the 16th and 7th Georgia and 13th Mississippi, under cover of our own retreating men, came to the assault, and approached to within one hundred yards of the fort unharmed. This caused a scene of desperate fighting, and a number of our men were killed and hurt, scarcely equalled during the war. These men, veterans of the Potomac and the flower of Longstreet's army, confident of the promised victory, plunged into a hail of lead of lead. Wires had been stretched from stumpy to stumpy, in front of the works, by Captain Poe. Over these the advancing enemy fell in confused heaps with the killed and wounded around them. Our artillery men hurled shell by hand forward upon the fallen and doated rebels.

Hot and hotter came the storm of shells. The ground over which they passed was carpeted with the slain. The ditch was filled with the dead, wounded and dying. Not one of their files followed; not a score of the gallant stormers escaped. The sun rising looked down through the cold mist and coming year, the following will show that Secretary Chase wisely procured enough legislation from the last Congress to last for the next fifteen months.

Our National Finances.

The Washington correspondent of the Philadelphia Inquirer, under date of the 3d inst., says:—

Considerable discussion having arisen as to the wants of the Government, as to additional legislation to procure money to meet the wants of the coming year, the following will show that Secretary Chase wisely procured enough legislation from the last Congress to last for the next fifteen months.

From Internal Revenue, \$80,000,000. From Tariff, \$100,000,000. Balance of 5-20 Loan, \$115,000,000. Balance of \$50,000 Loan, \$10,000,000. Balance in the Treasury, \$25,000,000. Balance of Legal Tender, \$40,000,000. Balance Treasury interest-bearing notes, \$50,000,000. 10-40 loan, \$40,000,000.

Total, \$1,120,000,000. It will be seen that the Treasury is in an easy condition, and in no prospect of immediate want. It is believed in high financial circles that Secretary Chase will not ask Congress to give him any additional legislation at present.

PEN AND SCISSORS.

The husband who divorced his wife with kisses, found afterward that she disagreed with him.

A House in Washington, two stories high, worth about \$10,000, rents this season for \$4,000, furnished.

Women should remember that men would rather ring their tender fingers only to wring their teeth.

Samuel Minnich was run over by an engine, at the Patterson depot, on Tuesday evening of last week, and badly injured.

Forty officers in the Italian army have been degraded to the ranks for having married contrary to the regulations.

The Marquis of Westminster's income is \$5,000 a day, and that of the four leading Rothschilds \$1,000 an hour! Precious hours those!

A little child of S. R. Nossenti, proprietor of the Patterson House, was so badly scalded, on Saturday week, that it died shortly afterwards.

The farmers in the vicinity of Middletown, Ohio, distributed, on Thanksgiving day, eighty wagon loads of wood among the soldiers' families of the town.

Last year 1,000,000 hogs were slaughtered and packed in Chicago, worth \$10,000,000. The number for the present year, it is said, will reach the value of \$20,000,000.

The Legislature of Alabama has passed a law that any man who sells salt for more than \$15 per bushel, shall be at once placed in the active class of the militia of the State.

The Louisville Journal says: "If any great artist wishes to get up a painting to be called the picture of desolation, he had better get the Rebel Confederacy to sit for him."

Governor Curtin has submitted for the approval of the President a plan for raising troops in Pennsylvania, which, it is said, if accepted, will place this State among the foremost in filling the required quota.

A New York letter says:—Parties in a position to know something about it, says that Grant spent about \$50,000 to carry the election, Broke about \$30,000 and Blunt not less than \$25,000. Total \$105,000.

The manners of the Brazilians, according to a recent traveler, are but so-so even among the highest ranks. In Rio, ladies of quality amuse themselves by spitting from their balconies on the heads of the foot-passengers below.

A lady in Boston was recently poisoned by green wall paper. On examination, the walls of the room were found to be covered with paper rich in green coloring matter which, being analyzed, yielded large quantities of arsenic.

A chap named Clark, confined in the jail of Juniata county for stealing money from a man named Smith, was released for the purpose of going as a substitute for Smith. After being sworn into the service he decamped.

A singular coincidence occurred among the clergy of Chicago on Thanksgiving day. Two ministers, of the same name, one a Methodist and the other a Unitarian, selected the same subject for discourse, and singularly enough made the same conclusions.

It is said that Admiral Renaud, of the French fleet, has written from New York to Paris, that his position, owing to the facilities offered to the Russians, is highly embarrassing; that, although the most studied politeness is shown him, he can see there is no heart in it, and that all eyes and hearts are for the Russians.

Brigam Young boasts that he can see more gold and silver from the door of his house than would equal the whole currency of the world. These mines are not allowed to be opened. The effect would be, according to Brigam's ideas, to bring near the City of Saints a large mining population, which he would find exceedingly hard to rule.

A young man in California, whose friends had ceased to correspond with him, woke up their interests by sending letters to business men in his native place, inquiring the price of a tolerably sized farm. Seven affectionate letters came from the friends by return of post, and two or three a day have come over since, including one from an old (and cold) sweetheart.

Two government horse contractors have been convicted in Cincinnati, by Court Martial, of fraud upon the government, and not only been sentenced to the penitentiary for five years, but have been fined \$30,000 each. If all the swindling contractors were made to disgorge in this manner, the demand for diamonds would considerably lessen in the market.

Some unknown reporter states that a lady who died last summer of fever, and was laid out by her friends, was discovered the night following, standing at the cup-board, eating cucumber pickles, or in other words:—

They left her "a laying in" white. Prepared for the grave's quiet slumbers; But they found her the very next night "A laying in" pickled cucumbers!

"Two Boards of Yankee officers," says a Richmond paper, have been organized for the proper distribution of the clothing and provisions sent by the North, for the prisoners in Belle Isle; one for the quartermaster's and one for the commissary's department. Col. Sanderson, a former hotel keeper in New York, was chief of the proceeding, and managed the distribution in a business like style.

The La Crosse Democrat tells a remarkable cat story. A German who in 1861 volunteered for the war, told his wife not to kill any of the kittens of his favorite cat, but to keep them and their increase until his return. The faithful woman has now on her hands the old cat and her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, etc., etc., to the number of two hundred and nine cats, catlets and kittens! The Government ought to give that soldier a furlough.

The Shirley-Jacobs (Huntington Co.) Herald says:—John Jacobs, of this place, a conscript by the last draft, hired a substitute, who was accepted by the Examining Board, and Jacobs discharged. The substitute has proven to be a deserter, and has been arrested as such, thus reclaiming the service from Jacobs by revocation of his discharge. If the position of the Board is tenable, Jacobs must either go into the service, hire another substitute or pay three hundred dollars commutation—no drawback on Jacobs.

General Butler in His Office.

Mr. Patton has written the life of Gen. Butler, in which we find the following, taken from the account of his administration in New Orleans:—

"The office was a large room, furnished with little more than a long table and a few chairs. In one corner, behind the table, sat, unobserved, a short, hand rearing, who at a signal from the General, would take down the examination of an applicant or an informer. The General began business by placing a pistol on the table within reach. After the detection of two or three plots to assassinate him, one of the aids caused a little shelf to be made under the table, while another, pistol unholstered, lay upon the table, which any gentleman disposed of attending to the game of assassination was at liberty to snatch.

"That single loaded pistol, carried in a pocket or laid upon a shelf, was Gen. Butler's sole precaution against assassination in a community of whom a majority would have treated his murderer as a patriotic hero, and rewarded him with honor and wealth. But that precaution sufficed. Chance gave him the reputation of being a dead shot, and every man who observed his movements could infer that his hand for his pistol would be quick and dexterous. He was riding along one day with a numerous retinue, when some orange trees, loaded with fruit, hung over a wall. As he rode by he took out his pistol, and aiming at a twig which hung from the wall, he fired, and the twig and brought the game rolling on the ground. It was a chance shot, which, probably, he could not have equalled in ten trials. But it answered the purpose of giving the impression that he was a dead shot, and that his hand for his pistol would be quick and dexterous. 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