



ALTOONA, PA.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1864.

Proclamation by President Lincoln. THANKSGIVING ON NOVEMBER 24.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 21. The following proclamation was promulgated this afternoon: By the President of the United States of America.

A PROCLAMATION. It has pleased Almighty God to prolong our National life another year. Defending us with His guardian care against unfriendly designs from abroad, and vouchsafing us, in His mercy, many and signal victories over the enemy (who is of our household), it has also pleased our Heavenly Father to favor as well our citizens in their homes as our soldiers in their camps, and our sailors on the river and seas, with unusual health.

He has largely augmented our free population by emancipation and by immigration, while He has opened to us new resources of wealth, and has crowned the labor of our workmen in every department of industry with abundant reward. Moreover, He has been pleased to animate and inspire our minds and hearts with fortitude, courage and resolution sufficient for the great trial of civil war into which we have been brought by our adherence as a nation to the cause of freedom and humanity, and to afford to us reasonable hopes of an ultimate and happy deliverance from all our dangers and afflictions.

Now, therefore, I Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do hereby appoint and set apart the last Thursday in November next as a day which I desire to be observed by all my fellow citizens, wherever they may then be, as a day of thanksgiving and praise to Almighty God, the beneficent Creator and Ruler of the universe.

I do further recommend to my fellow citizens aforesaid that on that occasion they do reverently humble themselves in the dust, and from thence offer up penitent and fervent prayers and supplications to the Great Disposer of Events for a return of the inestimable blessings of peace, Union and harmony throughout the land which has pleased Him to assign as a dwelling-place for our posterity throughout all generations.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed. Done at the city of Washington, this 20th day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-four and of the Independence of the United States the eighty-ninth.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN. By the President: WM. H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.

The Great Contest.

On Tuesday of next week will be decided one of the most important political contests of which this country was ever the theatre. That it should be conducted fairly and honestly, is the desire and prayer of every true patriot, but rascality, treachery and treason are becoming so mixed up in the contest that we almost despair of a fair expression of the will of the people. We might refer, in this article, to instances wherein the most barefaced infractions of law, intended to be practised, have been brought to light, and to cases in which the prejudices of men have overcome their better judgments, and led them to acts and expressions which, at other times, they would be ashamed of; but this is not our intention. We believe there is an overruling power which will bring order out of confusion, if, as a nation, we have not plunged so deeply into transgression, and become so ungrateful that the Ruler of Nations has determined to permit our destruction.

The result of this contest affects the whole civilized world, and the eyes of all nations are upon us. A portion of the people of every country are with each of the political parties of this country, but their desires in reference to the issue of the struggle are vastly different, just as different as their situations in life, or as philanthropy, agrarianism or jealousy animates them.

Our only hope is in the success of the party which will the most speedily and effectually crush the present rebellion. We do not want a subduing of the elements, laying smouldering coals which may at any time re-ignite a flame more difficult to master than that with which we are not battling. Let this rebellion be effectually extinguished and we shall never have another. Let the elements of discord be forever removed, cost what it may. It will cost no more, to remove them now, than at some future time.

Let each voter decide for himself which of the candidates are most likely to effect this object, in case of election, and vote according to his convictions of right, and not according to party dictation. In this event we have no fears of the result, and no apprehensions of disturbances at the polls or charges of corruption when the returns are footed up.

The Lady's Friend.

We learn from the November number of this New Magazine of Fashion and Literature, that it has already attained a large circulation. The aim of its publishers is to rival the three dollar magazines in the quality of their engravings and contents. Thus it has given during the present year, in every number, a finely engraved and colored Double Fashion Plate, while its other numerous engravings are of the best quality. The long and brilliant array of the literary contributors to the Lady's Friend, nearly all of whom are ladies, is highly creditable to the Magazine, and also to the country, as showing how large and cultivated a class of lady writers it possesses. Many may wonder how any magazine can be got up in so handsome and lavish a manner as this is, at the low price of \$2.50, saying nothing of the reduced rates to clubs.—The publishers say that it is only done by having a very large circulation, as money would certainly be lost on a small edition.

We have scarcely left ourselves room to speak of the November number, but we may briefly state that there is a beautiful and touching steel engraving, called "The Empty Cradle"—a very handsome Double Colored Fashion Plate—a quantity of other engravings, some of them very pretty, and all very useful to the ladies—a piece of music, and the usual assortment of interesting stories, poetry, &c.

Price \$2.50; 2 copies \$4.00; 9 copies \$16.00; 21 copies \$35.00. Single numbers sent, postage paid, for 25 cents. A Sewing Machine Premium is also given on certain terms. Address Deacon & Peterson, 319 Walnut street, Philadelphia.

Now is the time to begin making up Clubs for 1865

Blair County—Official.

On Friday last, the soldiers vote of Blair County was returned, and the Official vote of the county now foots up as follows:—

Table with columns for Candidate Name, Party, and Votes. Includes A. A. Barker (Union) 2895, R. L. Johnson (Dem.) 2317, etc.

Semmes Again Afloat.

The last European steamer brings news that the pirate Semmes is again at sea, in command of a swift and strong steamer named the Ranger. The Liverpool correspondent of the London Daily News says: "Captain Semmes, of whom since the sinking of the Alabama we have heard so little, is so energetic, and so successful, that the Mersey on Sunday last (October 9th), on board the bark Laurel, under the command of Captain S. F. Ramsey. The destination of the Laurel is rather mysterious at present, but, as far as the customs list of entry shows, the vessel has certainly cleared for ports where Confederate predilections predominate, viz: Nassau, Havana and Matanzas. Her cargo is of such a mixed nature that no intelligent state would have the slightest doubt as to its usefulness. It consists of some large guns, small arms, leather in bulk, ammunition, clothes, blankets, drugs, &c. But the Laurel must not be supposed to be intended for a cruiser; she is merely a tender, and carries out to a certain latitude guns and ammunition for a new sea steamer, of which Captain Semmes is to take command. This vessel is supposed to be a new screw steamer which was lying at Madeira on the 3d instant, and was there known under the name of the Ranger. The Ranger is large and very swift. To show that Captain Semmes does not go unattended, we may here state that he took with him on board the Laurel eight officers and one hundred men, most of whom served with him on board the Alabama."

John Bright.

An excellent friend of the Union, well known and highly respected, whose identity we shall not further disclose than to suggest that he may be Mr. John Skirving, of Genantown, has recently received a letter from Mr. Bright, M. P. of Birmingham in which he says that, in a public speech which he lately delivered in England, he had occasion to remark that the United States had given to the world in the last thirty years, a greater number of useful inventions than the combined intellect of Europe had been able to produce. Mr. Bright further says: "I watch your great struggle with undiminished interest. I hope it may now be deemed approaching its end. If this campaign should be as successful for the North as was that of last year, there will not be much left of the Confederacy by the end of this year. I hope to live to see the day when the integrity of your country is restored with Slavery a thing of the past. Such a result of your great conflict will do much for freedom—not for your content only, but for the whole world. It is gratifying to me to hear so many proofs of the good will of your countrymen—I have endeavored to do what seemed to me just, and calculated to promote peace between your people and ours." The opinions which Mr. Bright has here expressed are those of a true citizen of the world and advocate of the rights of man.—Philadelphia Press.

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Address of Gen. Early.

Gen. Early has issued an address to his soldiers on the late disaster. He says: "I had hoped to congratulate you on your splendid victory. The enemy have assumed no position in the Valley since their abandonment of Fisher's Hill on Friday last. The prisoners captured will amount to about four thousand. The enemy claim about thirteen hundred captured from Sheridan. Among Sheridan's prisoners are over three hundred officers, and among his artillery are twenty new guns, taken from Kershaw's rebel division. The capture of small arms is also large. The wounded have all been sent to Martinsburg and Winchester. One of Lee's staff was captured yesterday en route to the Valley, and I committed to prison here to-day. His rank is that of Captain. A dispatch says the details of General Sheridan's brilliant victory in the valley on the 19th are now coming in. The pursuit has ended for the present, and there is now time afforded to count the spoils of the gallant achievement. Prisoners are being sent to places of safe custody in rear, and the trophies of war adorn the camp of the gallant victors. General Custer has already brought to Washington the flags taken from the enemy. A Harper's Ferry letter, dated October 24, contains information from official sources, and there can be no doubt that 2,000 prisoners have already been captured. 1,500 arrived at Harper's Ferry on Monday, and 1,000 were left at Winchester. Our cavalry is still engaged in picking up rebel stragglers and deserters, who are glad to escape the rebel army after it has sustained so crushing a defeat. The rebels candidly admit that Sheridan is the best General against whom they have ever fought, and that his dashing tactics are more than a match for Jubal Early. It is ascertained from rebel prisoners and deserters, and other indisputable sources, that the loss of the enemy will reach 10,000 in killed, wounded and prisoners. Among the guns taken were 20 new brass pieces, which were recently turned out from Richmond, and with which Early had been supplied only a few days before the battle; 12,000 small arms were picked up on the field and along the track of the flying enemy, exhibiting a state of demoralization not often witnessed among veteran troops such as those with which Early was provided. The rebels had five infantry divisions and five cavalry brigades in the engagement, and a large portion of them embraced the flower of Lee's army. Our wounded are being rapidly removed to Martinsburg from Winchester. Gen. Sheridan is putting his army in order for another advance when Gen. Grant shall give the signal. He is already being supplied with material for another campaign, and will not long remain passive."

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