

# The Democratic Watchman.

VOL. 7.

BELLEVILLE, THURSDAY MORNING, MAY 8, 1862.

NO. 18.

## Miscellaneous.

### A Lesson of Despotism.

#### WAR CLAIMS AT ST. LOUIS.

EXTRACT FROM THE FINAL REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER.

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
WASHINGTON CITY, D. C.,  
April 1, 1862.

Sir:—I have the honor herewith to transmit, in compliance with a resolution of the House of Representatives of this date, a copy of the final report made by the commission on war claims at St. Louis, which commission consisted of Hon. Jos. Hitt, Hon. David Davis, and Hon. Hugh Campbell, which report gives a summary of the labors of the commission, and the reasons for their action in the different classes of claims brought before them.

Very respectfully yours,

EDWIN M. STANTON,  
Secretary of War.

Hon. G. A. Grow,  
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

St. Louis, March 10, 1862.

Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War.  
The undersigned, commissioners appointed to examine and decide upon claims against the military department of the west, originating prior to the 14th of October, 1861, have the honor to submit the following report:

[Here follows several pages showing the monstrous frauds practiced at St. Louis in the building of boats, furnishing supplies, &c., but we can only give the concluding portion.]

THURSDAY, March 6.

Claims of B. F. Moody & Co., 6300, 6301.

Lieut. Col. T. P. Andrews, paymaster in the army, called on by the government, by J. R. Shepley, Esq.

Question by Mr. Shepley. Will you please state what rank you hold; how long you have served in the army; and what is your present post of duty?

Answer. I hold the rank of Lieutenant Colonel; have served in the army nearly forty years; am the senior of the two deputy paymaster generals; and I am at present at the head of the pay department in the department of Missouri.

Question by Mr. Shepley. Col. Andrews, I hold in my hand an authority given by Gen. Fremont to Col. Bussey, of the 3d Iowa cavalry, authorizing him to clothe and equip his regiment. Will you please state whether by law General Fremont had or had not the power to give any such authority?

Answer. I suppose at that time that General Fremont had power to authorize Colonel Bussey to raise the regiment, but had no authority to interfere with the fiscal affairs of the regiment, or contracts for the regiment.

Question by Mr. Shepley. We have before us a variety of orders from General Fremont on different persons to furnish ordnance and ordnance stores. Will you please state whether or not Gen. Fremont has any authority to contract for ordnance and ordnance stores?

Answer. He had none, unless under an express power from the Secretary of War.

Question by Mr. Shepley. Is there any law in the law or regulations of the army, authorizing the commanding general to contract for mules, horses or forage?

Answer. I know of none. The quarter master is the proper person to make these contracts.

Question by Mr. Shepley. If the commanding general deems fortifications necessary at a particular place, in whom is the authority to contract for their construction?

Answer. Fortifications have never been, to my knowledge, contracted for, except in St. Louis. The material are contracted for, and the construction has always been under the direction of the engineer department proper.

Question by Mr. Shepley. Do you know any reason, or did you ever hear the late commanding general of this department give any reason why the rules and regulations of the army were thus disregarded?

Answer. I was never informed of any, nor was there any obligation on his part to give the information.

Question by Mr. Shepley. Did the commanding general ever make to you any remarks showing that he knowingly violated any of the laws and regulations of the War Department?

Answer. He did on one occasion, in my office, make remarks showing that he intended to disregard the ordinary instructions and regulations of the Government at Washington.

Question by Mr. Shepley. Can you repeat the substance of these remarks?

Answer. I can. This conversation was late in August or the early part of September. General Fremont came into my office with General McKinstry, and after General McKinstry left, he commenced the conversation without anything calling for it, that I am aware of. He spoke pleasantly, but said, "the people of the United States were in the field; that he was at their head; that he meant to carry out such measures as they (the people) expected him to carry out, with-

out regard to the red tape of the Washington people." My only reply was in a few general words, that as well as I could understand, the term "red tape" meant system of government, which, in its details, might be carried too far by the subordinates. But I had always been of the opinion that our general system was a wise and good one, and that he who undertook to set its principles or general details aside would sooner or later become entangled in difficulties by disregarding all system. He replied by repeating his general remark, (for I think the third time) that the people were in the field, and that he was at their head, and would have everything done according to their expectations from him; saying, *now we have only extra constitutional government; no civil rights, so to speak; all ordinary peaceful rules were to be set aside, and all this thing of red tape must give way very shortly to what the people required of him.* I had previously disobeyed General Fremont, by resisting an order of his which I considered unauthorized by law, and concerning which I gave my testimony before the congressional committee. General Fremont had never before been in my office, nor has he been there since. He had no business to transact with me that morning.

The declarations of General Fremont, as deposited by Colonel Andrews, were of so astounding a character that we felt it to be our duty to inquire if they had been made to others, with a view of ascertaining how far the sanction of such revolutionary sentiments might have superinduced the demoralization of the service which our investigations have satisfied us so extensively prevailed in the department. We therefore examined Major Chauncey C. P. Johnson, paymaster in the regular army, and find his statements of sufficient importance to justify us in giving them, unbridled, like those of Col. Andrews, a place in our report.

Chauncey C. P. Johnson, called by J. R. Shepley, associate counsel, testified as follows:

I am paymaster in the United States army; I was appointed last June, and stationed in the department of the west.

Question. Did the late commanding general in this department ever in your presence countenance any disregard of law, or the regulations governing the army?

Answer. General Fremont countenanced it frequently in my presence, and to me, by saying that he did not intend in the administration of this department, to be governed by the rules and regulations that were laid down in the department of the west. In regard to the official business which I had to transact with him, several instances occurred in which orders for payments had been issued to Col. Andrews, paymaster general, and these orders transferred to me, and not being considered by me legal, I called on him in regard to them, and he told me that he intended to do what he considered best for the service, without reference to law or regulations; that he intended to cut red tape and arrive at the end without reference to order or system, and directed me to pay these orders.

The statements of these witnesses—officers of unimpeachable integrity and intelligence—will, we are sure, be heard by the government with equal astonishment and sorrow. General Fremont proclaims, on assuming his command, that "there were no longer any civil rights; that there was no government except that outside of the Constitution, which had been suspended; that it was his determination to administer his department without reference to law or regulations; that the people of the United States were in the field, and that he was at their head, and that he meant to carry out such measures as they, the people, expected him to carry out, without regard to the red tape of the Washington people"—that is, the President and Congress. It is singular how perfectly these sentiments harmonize with those held by the usurpers, who in this and other ages of the world have sought and established absolute power upon the ruins of public liberty. Some of these usurpers, taking yet higher ground than that assumed in the interview with Colonel Andrews have claimed for themselves a mission to "carry out" the will of God, but none of them have sunk their pretensions below a special will to "carry out" the will of the people. Caesar, when he stood upon the banks of the Rubicon, and waved his right arm to advance, did not take a bolder declaration against his country than this. The words so earnestly and so often spoken, announced a revolution conceived, but which, happily, for the country, had not the strength to bring forth. No man has lived in the tide of times with a pure enough to be intrusted with such a power as is here claimed. Military chieftains who cut "red tape" always do it with their swords, and history proves that the throat of their country suffers as much as does the "tape" in the operation. As free institutions have their foundations in law, and in the obedi-

ence of the people and their representatives, civil and military, to it, this expression of a purpose to cast aside all political and constitutional restraints, made in the halls of legislation even, would alarm, but when made in the field by a chieftain, at the head of a great army, it chills and awes the patriot's heart by its paralytic spirit. It reveals an unscrupulous ambition, which awaits but the prestige and power of victory to sweep the government itself, as a cobweb from its path.

This sad page in the history of the late commander of this department gathers a deep shadow from the circumstances under which these declarations were made. Gen. Fremont had, a few weeks before, taken and subscribed the following military oath:—"I, John O. Fremont do solemnly swear that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States and that I will serve them honestly and faithfully against all enemies or opposers who may move, and that I will bear the orders of the President of the United States, and the orders of the officers over me according to the rules and articles of war."

He, thus, in sight of God and his country, had pledged faith with the government that he would bear to it "true allegiance," and he stood pledged by the most solemn of human sanctions to support that Constitution which, when the people of the field, places at "their head" the President of the United States, and as our General holding a commission under him. With a conflicting fondness he had been summoned from the obscurity of private life, and preferred above the veterans and a whole army of patriots, he was made a Major General. Scarcely has he valued in the department. We therefore examined Major Chauncey C. P. Johnson, paymaster in the regular army, and find his statements of sufficient importance to justify us in giving them, unbridled, like those of Col. Andrews, a place in our report.

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He, thus, in sight of God and his country, had pledged faith with the government that he would bear to it "true allegiance," and he stood pledged by the most solemn of human sanctions to support that Constitution which, when the people of the field, places at "their head" the President of the United States, and as our General holding a commission under him. With a conflicting fondness he had been summoned from the obscurity of private life, and preferred above the veterans and a whole army of patriots, he was made a Major General. Scarcely has he valued in the department. We therefore examined Major Chauncey C. P. Johnson, paymaster in the regular army, and find his statements of sufficient importance to justify us in giving them, unbridled, like those of Col. Andrews, a place in our report.

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## Select Poetry.

### The Countersign.

Alas! the weary hour passes slow,  
The night is very dark and still,  
And in the marshes far below  
I hear the hoarse and whistling will,  
I scarce can see a yard ahead,  
My ears are strained to each sound—  
I hear the hoarse and whistling will,  
And the springs bubbling thro' the ground.

Along the beaten path I pass,  
Where white rags mark my sentry's track,  
In formless shapes I seem to trace  
The formless form with bending back;  
I think I see the crouching line—  
I stop and list—I stoop and peer,  
Until the neighboring hillocks grow  
To groups of soldiers far and near.

With ready pace I wait and watch,  
Until my eyes familiar grow,  
Detect each harmless earthy notch,  
And turn guerilla into stone;  
And then amid the lonely glow,  
I see the tall old Chestnut tree,  
My silent marches I resume,  
And think of other times than these.

"Halt! who goes there?" My challenge o'er,  
I ring along the watchful line:  
"Retreat!" I hear a voice reply—  
"Advance, and give the countersign!"  
With bayonet at the charge I wait,  
The corporal gives the mystic word,  
With arms apart I charge my mate,  
Then onward pass and all is well.

But in the tent that night awakes,  
I ask if in the fray I fall,  
Can I the mystic answer make  
When the angels sentries call?  
And pray that Heaven may so ordain,  
Where'er I go, what fate be mine,  
Whether in pleasure or in pain,  
I still may give the Countersign.

A TIMELY REPROOF.—Humt and sharp wit are never put to better use than answering a fool according to his folly, and we could wish that reproofs like the following were more frequent:

"Some five or six years ago, in one of the trains of cars running between Newark Jersey City, N. J., there was a young naval officer, who was constantly intermingling his conversation with the most profane oaths. A young lady was so situated that she could not hear every time he swore. At first she bore it with perfect equanimity; but as it continued, and rather increased in the obnoxious character of his imprecations, she began to grow fidgety, and her eyes flashed. We knew a bolt would be shot, and that it would strike him. It came directly 'tongue'."

"Yes," was the answer, in a half unconscious, but slightly sneering tone.

"Then," was the reply, "if you wish to swear any more you will greatly oblige me, and probably the rest of the passengers also if you would do it in Hebrew."

I watched him. It had hit. His color came and went—now red, now white. He looked at the young lady, then at his boots, then at the ceiling of the car; but he did not utter any more, either in Hebrew or English, and he probably remembered that young lady.

An old Scotch clergyman of the true Sparganetic class, who was terribly annoyed at many of his congregation indulging in the habit of bolting out of church previous to, and during the benediction, had one day just got that length in the service, and was standing with out-stretched hands and closed eyes, when the noise of the as-caping multitude attracted his attention, and disturbed the quiet of the church. Quietly opening his eyes, he thus addressed the door keeper, and effectually stopped the practice for that day at any rate: "And now John, open the doors, and let all the cursed people who don't want the blessing retire!"

A jolly fellow had an office next to a doctor's. One day an elderly gentleman of the old fogey school, lumbered into the wrong shop. "Dr. X. m.—Don't lie here," says P., who was in full scribble over some important papers without looking up. "Oh! I thought it was his office." "Next door." "Pray sir, can you tell me has the doctor many patients?" "Not living."

The old gentleman was never heard of in the vicinity again. But the story was, that Dr. X. threatened to sue P. for libel. However he came to think better of it.

THE GOOD TIMES PROMISED.—"Lincoln, economy, honesty and reform," "Protection to labor and capital," "Low taxes, roast beef and prosperous times,"

"No interference with slavery where it exists," "Lincoln and the Union," "No danger of sectional parties."

A minister appointed chaplain in an Ohio regiment, lately wrote the following note to a brother preacher: "Dear brother, if you can get a consubstus as chaplain, it will pay you \$10 a month, and a living beside. The cause of Christ kneads you."

In Portland, Mass. (Gov. Win.), a young woman of 25, has married an octogenarian named Shandy.—*Eastern Chronicle.*

Perhaps her young eyes were dazzled by the light of a Shandy-lect.—*Prentice.*

Commodore Foote was wounded at Fort Donelson and now goes on crutches, but he travels fast for all that. He doubtless thinks his injured foot will feel better when it rests completely on Fort Pillow.

What will be the final signal for a gambler to give up his tricks? The sound of the last trump!

The Milwaukee News truly says:—The people of the United States have suffered more from robbery by public officers, since the Republican party came into power, than during the whole previous existence of the Government, from Washington down to Buchanan. The number of the Thiers is larger, and the sum stolen greater in the aggregate.

## Yorktown.

Before the commencement of the rebellion, Yorktown was a quiet unobtrusive little village, of between twenty and thirty houses, half of them uninhabited, with the ruins of tenements destroyed during Cornwallis's siege everywhere. The American breakwaters were nearly obliterated, while the more prominent entrenchments of the British were still comparatively perfect. The outworks which the latter were compelled to evacuate on the night of the 25th of September, 1781, lie on the western outskirts of the town, and are probably still in good preservation. They were strong positions, and their abandonment must have left the portion of the town in which they were situated in a very exposed condition; and the American officers, when they took possession of them, expressed much surprise at their being voluntarily given up. The most eastern of the redoubts stormed by the allied forces on the 15th of October, 1781, being near the river, has nearly been washed away; that taken by the French portion of the army may still be traced. The capture of the redoubts rendered the destruction or surrender of the British forces inevitable, and on the 17th Cornwallis solicited a truce and agreed to capitulate. The main works, situated on the eastern edge of the town, were in excellent keeping in 1854, and must have been formidable when bristling with cannon and occupied by soldiers. The embankment was too broad to be perforated by cannon shot, and too steep to be easily scaled by an assault.

The field where the formalities of the surrender occurred is a respectable inclosure of some hundred acres, and it was about the same in 1781. It joins the town on the south. The very spot where Gen. O'Hara is said to have delivered up his sword and apologized for the absence of Cornwallis, is now marked by two poplar trees, which were planted in commemoration of the event. The field itself is nearly a plain, and is admirably adapted to the purpose of drill and parade. From the top of the hill on which the town is situated there is an excellent view extending into Chesapeake Bay, and reaching almost to the Virginia capes.

Yorktown formerly enjoyed quite a valuable West India trade. The great natural capabilities of the place as a basis for military operations attracted the attention of Jefferson Davis, and there can be no doubt that the entrenchments constructed by the British in 1781 have been materially strengthened since the rebellion. When Yorktown falls, the fate of the peninsula is sealed, and the route to Richmond opened.

A Chapter on Corns.

Hear how the inimitable Jones, of the *Harborside Patriot*, pathetically discourages on corns. He has had the affliction himself, and therefore "speaks by the book."

"Who hath sorrow?—who hath we?—who hath pain without stint?—who ambleth in his gait like a grained army horse? He that hath corns on the approach of a storm!"

"Was there ever anything more annoying than a corn, not a spiritual corn, but one of those pestiferous fellows about the size of a dime or a two pence? If corns had been included in the sins sent upon the children of Israel, our opinion is, that their sufferings would have been intolerable."

Corns are a modern institution. Of course they date back farther than our memory runs, but we do not read of Moses or David, or any of the patriarchs walking as if they were tramping on eggs to avoid the full pressure of leather on a gay old corn the size of a hocky nut; still we remember the time well when corns were not as plenty as they are now—when they were ascribed to tight boots, and were deemed a fitting punishment to pride by the straight-laced. But all these old theories are exploded; since it is found that a whiter man wear loose or tight boots, it is all the same, and corns are faithfully on the increase.

"A night or two ago we stood upon the pavement listening to an itinerant vendor of corns. An old chap on the left foot, that we pared down a little less than a hundred times, felt as if a hot darned needle was run into him. The vendor was eloquent and with a pair of highly inflated lungs he spoke of the virtue of his medicine in eradicating corns in such a manner that three who thrusted a stray quarter on our next pocket to go in, but three we let it drop again, as the thought came upon us how often we had our eyes shut up by corn doctors and vendors of corns. We have read 'Durocher on corns,' and derived no other knowledge from it than the fact that the eminent writer himself must in his time have had corns, so accurately does he describe the active pains of 'hard corns,' 'soft corns,' and 'bunions.' Temporary relief may be had by some remedies, the most popular of which is frequently bathing the foot and paring the thick cuticle until the little black spot appears where the seat of the pain evidently lies, but as for curing them—talk to us of baling the Mississippi with a gourd, or bring down elephants with pop-guns!—but oh! talk to us no more of a cure for corns! It is not in the books—and the discover thereof has not yet made his debut upon this mundane sphere."

A Corkonian on being asked at breakfast how he came by "that black eye," said he slept on his fist."