

Wednesday, Dec. 13, 1863.

D. L. IMBRIE, Editor & Proprietor.

For President in 1864,

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, OF ILLINOIS.

For Vice President,

ANDREW G. CURTIN, OF PENNSYLVANIA.

SCHOLARSHIP FOR SALE

A SCHOLARSHIP IN IRON CITY COLLEGE, PITTSBURGH, Pa. for sale at \$1000.00. Enquire at Probationary office, Beaver, Pa. Dec 23, '63

There will be no paper issued from this office next week. It being customary with us, and the country press generally, not to publish any during the holidays.

There will be a meeting of the Union League of Beaver, in the Court House, on Saturday evening, Dec. 26, at 7 P. M., to elect three Delegates to State Convention. A full attendance is requested.

We would call attention to the card of Dr. George Phelps, who has lately located in Phillipsburg for the practice of his profession.

There will be a supper given at the Union School Hall, in Rochester, on Thursday evening, the 24th inst.; the proceeds to be applied for the benefit of the sick and wounded soldiers. All are invited, ladies as well as gentlemen.

The Progress We Have Made.

We shall, from time to time, give a brief notice of the National progress in restoring to the Union States and Territories which were forced out of the Union by the infamous crew of rebel slaveholders, demagogues and traitors, and shall now commence by showing the condition of affairs in Louisiana.

When our fleets, after the most splendid fighting known in naval warfare, triumphantly passed the strong and almost impregnable forts of the rebels, on the Mississippi, and took possession of the city of New Orleans, the whole State was in the possession of the conspirators—all the property and effects of our government, and of loyal Northern men, had been seized and converted to rebel use, and the city itself was filled with the vilest and abandoned rebel ruffians. It became apparent that, having been so intensely rebellious, the rebel conspirators were necessary to bring the inhabitants to a sense of duty to their country and government. Those measures, so well administered by the patriotic and fearless Butler, who was wisely placed in command, soon made a terrible noise in the world. Every Northern friend of the rebels (we mean the Copperhead Democrat) who wished well to the cause of treason, and the people of England and France who hate the free principles of Americans, feared the consequences of them, and denounced Butler in unmeasured terms as a monster, a brute, a despot, &c. Never was there in the world an administrative policy more successful than that of Gen. Butler, and his wisdom was so manifest that Gen. Banks, who was appointed his successor, found it necessary to adopt the same course.

Since then, owing to the wise and successful policy of Gen. Butler, New Orleans has undergone a wholesome purgative of conspirators, rebel spies, agents, traitors and known adherents of the rebellion, male and female, so that it is now one of the most loyal cities of the Union. It has altered much the old elements of society. It is materially changed, and there is but little left of that dangerous and combustible material which was used by the fire-eating leaders.

Freedom of opinion on the subject of Slavery is now undisturbed in the Crescent city, and for the first time in its history, emancipation is openly and boldly advocated. The Union men of New Orleans, and indeed nine tenths of all the inhabitants, have been convinced, by terrible and sad experience, that in their peculiar position, at the foot of the great Valley, the only safety against all future rebellion, plots, conspiracies and revolts against the government, and the only security for the prosperity of their City and State, is in emancipation.

The working-men, the Germans and men of all classes, have held their meetings and conventions, and adopted resolutions preparatory to the formation of a new Constitution, and of putting into operation an entire free soil government of the State, and all this is done by the consent of prominent and leading slaveholders. Such will be the result every where, as we gain possession of territory held by rebel force; and the principles so wisely enunciated by President Lincoln will triumph, until we shall see the stars and stripes float over the whole Union, relieved from the curse of slavery.

Our restrained expression of public opinion upon all subjects of public policy through the exercise of the elective franchise, and implicit obedience to the decisions of the popular will, it legitimately and constitutionally given, have always been and must be forever considered essential not only to the well being, but to the very existence of a Republic. If the rights of the people, for whose benefit alone governments were instituted, are in any degree denied or infringed upon in these particulars, popular government becomes but a mere farce and an empty and unmeaning sound. And whether these rights are assailed or their free exercise withheld by an assumed power of those who may be in authority or by the brute force of anarchy or revolt, the result is equally fatal to the rights of the people and alike at war with the plainest teachings of true democracy.

It is perfectly manifest to all intelligent men that it is against these essential principles of Republicanism, that the rebellion of the slaveholders of the South aims its most deadly shafts, and if through reverse of our armies, the clamors of traitorous sympathizers with the rebels, or a failure on the part of the national authorities of the people to understand or recognize the great principles at issue, the Federal Government shall in every way legitimize the rebellion by any sort of recognition of the originators or leaders as constituting a government or power to be treated with or pacified as such, then there will be in that recognition a complete abandonment of every right of the people to the plottings and machinations of discontented factions, and the decrees of brute force. Not content with the virtual and almost total suppression of free thought, free speech and unrestricted popular elections in their own States, the slaveholders of the South determined to resist the decrees of the popular will over the Union, and do by their revolt against the government declare that they will only respect the decisions made by the people at the ballot-box, when and only when those decisions shall be in conformity with the will of rogues and traitors who assume control and in harmony with their infernal demands.

The aspect of the present struggle seems to have been utterly regarded by the leaders of the falsely called Democratic party who are so eager to compromise with the rebels in arms and to have peace on any terms, even at the expense of all that freemen hold sacred. Suppose that the called a government, at Richmond were willing to make peace on receiving only such concessions as ordinarily and without the accompaniment of a den and by armed force, the United States could readily grant, how could such concession be now made without a direct admission of their right to revolt and an explicit recognition of the superiority of southern slaveholding principles that are vital to the existence of the Government and if once repudiated or disregarded by the loyal men of the Union, will open wide the flood-gates of anarchy and ruin. Such would undoubtedly be the case if such pernicious and wicked principles as were advocated by the late candidate of the mis-called democratic party in Pennsylvania, for Governor, and the small fry of leaders in the State who favored mean and sly submission to traitors in arms. But happily we have escaped the deep and dreadful degradation which would have been brought upon our country, and the total destruction of the cause of human freedom, had they succeeded in placing themselves in a position when they could have demanded that our armies and fleets should be withdrawn and our glorious Constitution and the elective franchise and every dear and cherished right, which we held under that sacred instrument, be permitted to be trampled under the feet of unprincipled and perjured enemies of the human race—for such are the leaders of the rebels now in arms, and their friends and coadjutors in the North who have been giving them aid and comfort.

The attention of our readers is directed to the advertisement of T. M. McCord, which will be found in another column of our paper. We are well acquainted with Mr. McCord, and feel safe in saying that any business left in his care will be faithfully attended to.

The Toronto Globe gives an able article on the President's Message with the remark: There will be commotions and rumors of commotions; a great army will be needed to preserve order, and the expense will be heavy; but in the end Mr. Lincoln's "perging away" will bring the Southern people to submit to what is inevitable.

We published the President's Message in our last issue, but were compelled to defer comments for want of space. As our readers have read and formed their opinions of its merits or demerits, we do not propose giving a synopsis or commenting at length. So far as we are able to ascertain the message is well received and the criticisms favorable. It is of all the productions we have yet seen of our worthy President; the most carefully written, and its recommendations the most forcibly and logically presented. The President has a style of his own, running through all his writings, which points unmistakably to the author. There is an honesty and frankness of expression, clearness of thought, forcefulness of language, with a comparative carelessness of style, that strikes the reader as the production of an honest, frank, thoughtful, clear-headed man, of comprehensive views, sound judgment, and good practical common sense—just what the author of the Message really is. It is true there are few sentences and high sounding phrases, but we are the better pleased to find them wanting. At all times, and more especially now, do we need a practical man in the Executive chair, to see and provide for evils as they really exist. When opposition, editors and speakers call President Lincoln a practical writer and practical man, they bestow upon him the highest compliment possible. We are pleased, too, with the firmness with which the President says he will adhere to the policy his judgment approves. At the opening of the rebellion, we were accustomed to hear the remark, "Oh for Old Hickory now,"—alluding to his characteristic determination; and we are fully convinced President Lincoln is not one whit behind Old Hickory in this respect, and we honor him for it. The truth is, his firmness has saved the Union, and has been the greatest cause of grief to rebels and their allies. Conscious of the rectitude of his intentions and the correctness of his judgment, he promulgates his views, issues his proclamations, and then says to enemies of the Government, North and South, in the language of Fitz James:

"Come on, come all, this rock shall fly from its firm base as soon as I."

That part of the Message that treats of reconstruction is the most important and the most criticized. It is believed that rebellion will soon be crushed and, of course, some plan must be prepared by which rebellious States may be restored to the Union of States again. The question had already been freely discussed in the public journals and extreme measures urged by men of both parties. The President possessing the happy faculty of steering equally clear of both extremes in almost all disputed questions, and thus arriving more nearly at truth and right, has done so in this case. He has proposed the only practical and safe way for a restoration that we have yet seen—the only one on which we can rest and hope for permanent peace. We have but little doubt its timely appearance, offering as it does a general pardon to citizens and soldiers of the South, will be attended with happy results. Thousands of suffering, half-dressed and half-starved privates in the southern army, on learning, will avail themselves of its provisions. The rebellion is now sustained alone by the leaders, and when they are deserted as they soon must be by the masses, whose sufferings are becoming unendurable, the war will close. We have not space now to discuss the plan proposed, but may refer to it again.

An opposition editor states that the oath proposed to be taken by the people of the South, previous to their return, would not now be taken by half the people of the North. We have only to say, in reply, that it is not true that one half, or one-third of the people of the North would refuse to take that oath. There are some who probably would not, and the reason is, their enmity and treason to the Government under which they live. No loyal man would refuse to take it, and no one who earnestly desires the good of the country could make such a prediction.

Dr. Thomas Donohoo, late of Wellsville, Ohio, and formerly of New Wilmington, Lawrence county, has established himself in Beaver, for the purpose of practicing medicine. He is a graduate of one of the best medical institutions in the United States, and, in addition, has had about twenty-five years practice. We have been acquainted with him for several years, and it gives us pleasure to recommend him as a gentleman and physician. He enjoyed a fine reputation in New Wilmington, where he practiced for about seventeen years.

Dr. Donohoo possesses all the qualifications requisite to succeed in this place, and we sincerely trust he may, as his experience and ability are much needed here at this time. As a Surgeon, Dr. Donohoo is acknowledged to have but few superiors. We cheerfully recommend him to the citizens of Beaver as a Physician worthy of their confidence, a gentleman and a Christian. Office at the National Hotel.

Mr. Easton's 1861 Bishop Hopkins published a book in which all his learning and church influence were used in a labored endeavor to prove First: That at a time when sixty millions or more of slaves, held in the white race of men—our Saviors and his Apostles approved and approved slavery; and, secondly, That the great idea of the Revolution, and upon which all our political institutions are founded in fact, and should be repudiated as hurtful and injurious to individuals and to a people, viz: "That all men are born free and equal with certain inalienable rights," &c.

This most wicked, anti-Christian and anti-democratic book fell impotent and almost forgotten until raised into notice again by the Pennsylvania Democratic Central Committee, who gave it circulation in Pennsylvania, the last spring and summer, as an electioneering paper. This action of the Pennsylvania Democratic Central Committee of Pennsylvania was not sufficient to show the high appreciation and approval of the leaders of the "Democratic party" of the anti-Democratic teachings of this learned "Bishop" and his book.

The whole representation of the National "Democratic party" in Congress must give him and then their endorsement also by voting for him as Chairman of Congress this present session.

I send you the names of the members voting for Bishop Hopkins for Chairman, which please publish for the information of all true Democrats.

BLACK LIST

- Allen, J. A.
Allen, Wm. J.
Ancona,
Bills,
Brown, J. S.
Coffin,
Cox,
Crawson,
Dawson,
Donnison,
Egan,
Elzerbin,
Elledge,
Erickson,
Gardner,
Hall,
Harrington,
Harris, B. G.
Harris, C. M.
Holman,
Holtman,
Johnson, Wm.
Kobeleich,
King,
Knapp,
Lutz,
Lazar,
Lo Blund,
Mallory,
Marey,
McAllister,
McDowell,
McKinney,
Miller, Wm. R.
Morris, Jas. E.
Nelson,
Noble,
Pendleton,
Ridgell, Saml. J.
Robinson,
Ruffin, Jas. S.
Russ,
Scott,
Stobbin,
Stoyle, J. E.
Swope, J.
Wadsworth,
Ward,
White, C. A.
White, J. W.
Wilfield,
Wood Fernando,
Yeaman.

The above names should be kept standing and put in every Democratic paper in the nation.

Notice is hereby given that any person enrolled may appear before the Board of Enrollment up to January 3, 1864 (to which date the time is extended by order of the Provost Marshal General), and claim to have his name stricken off the list if he can show to the satisfaction of the Board that he is not liable to military duty on account of:

- 1st: Aliens;
2nd: Non-Residence;
3rd: Unsoundness of Age;
4th: Manifest Physical Disability;
5th: Insanity;
6th: Pro. Marshal, 24th Dist.

One of the Victims. Milton McGown, one of the prisoners recently released at Richmond, was buried with military honors. The Coroner alluding to his death says: "The body retained its natural appearance; but every one who looked upon it must have been satisfied that the noble young man died of starvation. Mr. J. McGown informed us that out of three hundred and sixty who had arrived at Annapolis one hundred had died when he was there, and the physicians ascribed him that starvation was the cause of his death. A friend of Milton, who had been with him in his imprisonment, said that the ration consisted of about one ounce meat per day to four men, and one pint of meal made of rye and corn ground together. This meal was mixed with water and dried in the sun. The same man related instances where men had died in the act of endeavoring to eat this bread, and with a piece actually in their mouths, and the starting survivors had taken the bread from the mouth of the dead man and eaten it."

New York, Dec. 21.—Special to the Tribune, dated Washington, 19th. Although no official order has yet been issued, it may be considered that Gen. Scofield will be relieved within a day or day at his own request as the order will probably reach him that Gen. Rosecrans will succeed him. A new command will be arranged for Gen. Curtis, the President having said that the charges against him in connection with cotton speculations are utterly unfounded.

Just at dark we were ordered to quit work and get ready to move. The order was anything but pleasant, but we got ready and then learned that we were ordered to march to the front. A distance of four miles. We had marched ten miles in the morning and worked hard all afternoon, and to march fourteen that night was rather tough; but we did it, and here we are. We have come a distance of twenty miles since (since the rebels) is to be let alone. I find the people at home had better be a match for Lee, and he has the confidence of the army. If they are anxious for a winter campaign let them come out and see what it is like. They will get their bellies full of it in a short time.

Mr. Easton's 1861 Bishop Hopkins published a book in which all his learning and church influence were used in a labored endeavor to prove First: That at a time when sixty millions or more of slaves, held in the white race of men—our Saviors and his Apostles approved and approved slavery; and, secondly, That the great idea of the Revolution, and upon which all our political institutions are founded in fact, and should be repudiated as hurtful and injurious to individuals and to a people, viz: "That all men are born free and equal with certain inalienable rights," &c.

This most wicked, anti-Christian and anti-democratic book fell impotent and almost forgotten until raised into notice again by the Pennsylvania Democratic Central Committee, who gave it circulation in Pennsylvania, the last spring and summer, as an electioneering paper. This action of the Pennsylvania Democratic Central Committee of Pennsylvania was not sufficient to show the high appreciation and approval of the leaders of the "Democratic party" of the anti-Democratic teachings of this learned "Bishop" and his book.

The whole representation of the National "Democratic party" in Congress must give him and then their endorsement also by voting for him as Chairman of Congress this present session.

I send you the names of the members voting for Bishop Hopkins for Chairman, which please publish for the information of all true Democrats.

BLACK LIST

- Allen, J. A.
Allen, Wm. J.
Ancona,
Bills,
Brown, J. S.
Coffin,
Cox,
Crawson,
Dawson,
Donnison,
Egan,
Elzerbin,
Elledge,
Erickson,
Gardner,
Hall,
Harrington,
Harris, B. G.
Harris, C. M.
Holman,
Holtman,
Johnson, Wm.
Kobeleich,
King,
Knapp,
Lutz,
Lazar,
Lo Blund,
Mallory,
Marey,
McAllister,
McDowell,
McKinney,
Miller, Wm. R.
Morris, Jas. E.
Nelson,
Noble,
Pendleton,
Ridgell, Saml. J.
Robinson,
Ruffin, Jas. S.
Russ,
Scott,
Stobbin,
Stoyle, J. E.
Swope, J.
Wadsworth,
Ward,
White, C. A.
White, J. W.
Wilfield,
Wood Fernando,
Yeaman.

The above names should be kept standing and put in every Democratic paper in the nation.

Notice is hereby given that any person enrolled may appear before the Board of Enrollment up to January 3, 1864 (to which date the time is extended by order of the Provost Marshal General), and claim to have his name stricken off the list if he can show to the satisfaction of the Board that he is not liable to military duty on account of:

- 1st: Aliens;
2nd: Non-Residence;
3rd: Unsoundness of Age;
4th: Manifest Physical Disability;
5th: Insanity;
6th: Pro. Marshal, 24th Dist.

One of the Victims. Milton McGown, one of the prisoners recently released at Richmond, was buried with military honors. The Coroner alluding to his death says: "The body retained its natural appearance; but every one who looked upon it must have been satisfied that the noble young man died of starvation. Mr. J. McGown informed us that out of three hundred and sixty who had arrived at Annapolis one hundred had died when he was there, and the physicians ascribed him that starvation was the cause of his death. A friend of Milton, who had been with him in his imprisonment, said that the ration consisted of about one ounce meat per day to four men, and one pint of meal made of rye and corn ground together. This meal was mixed with water and dried in the sun. The same man related instances where men had died in the act of endeavoring to eat this bread, and with a piece actually in their mouths, and the starting survivors had taken the bread from the mouth of the dead man and eaten it."

The Provost Marshal General's Report has been published. In it Col. Fry's capture of a few facts not covered by that of the Secretary of War. He says that in making up the quota of the district he took into consideration the number of available men, not of the population, and in the last draft called for one fifth of the first class. Up to November 27th 59,990 men had been conscripted, being a little more than one in ten of those drafted to the amount of \$1,788,000. Col. Fry recommends the abolition of the commutation clause, or its limitation to Quakers and other conscientious opposers of war. He thinks that \$300 bounty should be paid to raw recruits, and \$400 to veterans; and that volunteers will be more easily obtained by increasing the bounty than by increasing the pay. Eighty-three thousand and two hundred and forty-two volunteers were received between January 1st and November 1st 1863—\$3,048 of them being for three years or the war. Nearly 22,000 absentees and deserters have been apprehended by the officers of the Bureau between the 1st of May and the 1st of November. It is found that the number who deserted and absented themselves in September and October is but one-half as great as the number in May and June. This diminution is attributed to the increased probability of arrest.

New York, Dec. 20.—The Herald's special Col. Peppers (Va.) dispatch of the 19th inst., says that almost instantaneously with the recent raid by Colonel Jones through our lines near Fairfax station an attack was made on the picket lines of the First Cavalry Division in front of this place. One of our pickets was gobbled up, and then their raid ended.

Recent rains have made the roads impassable, especially for artillery. Citizens here tell us we are soon to evacuate their town; but no signs of such a movement are apparent. Creditable witnesses from Richmond state that our prisoners there are better fed than their own people, and much better than they would be were it not the desperate straits of the citizens of the Confederacy must be kept from our knowledge. Fresh beef was four dollars per pound and fresh bread \$3.50 per loaf, each as formerly cost only five cents; the consequence is that thousands must starve or go into the army and divide their rations with their families.

It has been determined by the rebels to conscript every male between the ages of fifteen and fifty five inclusive for one last desperate and decisive effort in favor of the Confederacy. The attempt will probably be made upon Washington or some portion of the North. In this conscription both negroes and whites are to be included, and they are also to be thrown into the same ranks together indiscriminately. With this immense conscription army Jeffersons to precipitate a battle on the Potomac River, or perhaps all the conscription in person. He will endeavor to estimate the positions of these borders by most extravagant stories of his own making, and at our hands by the Southern people, and by most fabulous promises of plunder to be obtained through the victories which shall be gained in northern towns and cities.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—The Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Delegates of Virginia, at Alexandria, agreed last night on a bill calling a Convention for the purpose of abolishing slavery in that State, which will be passed to-morrow.

The funeral of Maj. Gen. Buford took place this afternoon and was largely attended. Eight Major Generals acted as pall-bearers. President Lincoln attended the services.

The report of the Commission appointed by the Navy Department, consisting of three Chief Engineers, who have made careful experiments for five months, showing the practicability of using petroleum or hydrocarbon oils for the purpose of generating steam, has been issued and proved satisfactory. It is said by those who have seen it that the results show a great saving, not only for merchant steamers, but a naval steamer can keep the sea three times as long as with anything else.

It is understood that the majority of the Committee on Military Affairs in the House are opposed to the repeal of the Commutation clause in the enrollment act as reported from the Senate. Senator Wilson speaks of his intention to offer an amendment, authorizing the enlistments in the rebel States to be credited to the quotas of the State for which the officers procure the recruits, whether white or black.

Members of Congress are receiving large numbers of letters containing suggestions and opinions relative to the proposed change in the enrollment act. Of 1051 applications for commissions in the negro regiments, 500 have been recommended for appointment.

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 17.—The following despatch has been received here from Los Angeles to day: Chas. Watkins, indicted for murder, was tried by a special grand jury yesterday. This morning he was brought into court for trial, and plead guilty, when the Vigilance Committee entered the Court room in large numbers, and took the prisoners from the custody of the sheriff and hung him. Watkins was an Englishman, and a Mormon. His parents reside in Salt Lake City. He is known to have killed three men in this State, and confessed six other murders.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 19.—The Secretary of the Navy has received a despatch from Commander Clay, dated Halifax, 15th inst., saying that the Chesapeake had been transferred to the British authorities.

NEW YORK, Dec. 19.—The contractors in Charleston harbor were getting the famous floating battery ready to drift in the late gale, and were, through the other obstructions, now now ashore near the northern end of Folly Island.

BOUSEY. The Senate Military Committee has reported in favor of increasing the bounty of \$400 only to the 5th of Jan. 1864; after that to bounty will be allowed substitutes, and only \$100 to drafted or enlisted men.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 19.—The British steamer Chesapeake, dated the 15th inst., says that General Balfour's plan of General Butler by which our suffering soldiers will be relieved from Southern prisons will be forwarded to Gen. Butler, with a view to its being carried out. It is said that the plan will be successful, whether or not the rebels will be allowed to be released. The statement that the rebels have been given, tending to ignore the rights of prisoners of war, of colored soldiers whom the rebels have taken prisoners, whether originally bound or free, is incorrect. On the contrary the most stringent orders have recently been issued under which the rebel authorities are to hold to the strictest accountability with regard to colored prisoners.

The Chesapeake having been captured in British waters will be given up to the Colonial authorities. Secretary Welles and Seward have telegraphed to Halifax. It is not believed, however that the pirate will be allowed to put to sea again.

A very large proportion of the rebels in our hands, not less than one-third of them, it is said, desire to enlist in the Navy, and it is understood the Secretary of the Navy has agreed to permit them to do so. Gen. Maxton is reported to have said that he could, on very short notice, furnish ten thousand sailors from the prisoners camped at Point Lookout, of which he is in charge.

A Times special from Washington dated the 18th inst.: The Ex-Confederates of Virginia, have arranged their lists, and announce their wish to take place January 15th. The first parcel offered will be Arlington, the home-stead of Gen. Lee. Comprising eleven hundred acres, and the remainder are located at Alexandria.

CHATTANOOGA, Dec. 18.—Gen. John H. Morgan escaped across the Tennessee at Gilesport's Landing, sixty miles above here. On Sunday afternoon Capt. William Cummings and Robert Gunning, who were captured from Columbus with him, were captured together with his escort of thirty. On reaching the neighborhood of the river they proposed to surrender to prevent pursuit. An attempt had been made to cross in a small boat, but the mouth of Male Creek, which the citizen who eluded them, had cut off the alarm, and it was necessary Morgan escape. Gen. Morgan has been reported to have possibly Morgan may yet be captured.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 18.—The Senate Military Committee had a long session to-day on amendments to the conscription act. After an extended debate the \$300 exemption clause was stricken out, and the two classes put into one. These amendments only passed amendments to the bill, and are not intended to amend the bill, but are intended to pass them as amendments to the bill, and are intended to be passed before the adjournment of the House, and before the adjournment of the Senate. The object is to postpone the adjournment of the House to the 5th of January.

CINCINNATI, Dec. 18.—The Saturday Fair will be held on Saturday. A special to the Herald dated Cumberland, 15th inst., says: Longstreet divided his army on Monday one part making for the River Station and the other for the River Station. The movement of Gen. Sherman's forces toward the rebel plotters, heavy fighting occurred yesterday between General and Church's river. Longstreet is reported to be killed and his forces surrounded. This needs confirmation.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 21.—The House Military Committee this morning agreed to report a bill commencing the two classes of enrolled persons and will not take the three hundred dollar commutation question until after the holidays.

It is now considered extremely doubtful whether Congress will repeal the three hundred dollar clause of the conscription act.

The Russian fleet will depart in the course of the week. The President will visit it to-morrow. Congress will undoubtedly adjourn by Wednesday, over the holidays. The draft will probably be postponed twenty days.

INCREASE OF SOLDIERS' PAY.—All sorts of propositions for increasing the pay of private soldier to sixteen dollars a month, fifteen dollars a month, and twenty five a month are already thrown upon Congress, and now propositions are said to be coming to rise the pay of officers twenty percent. Petitions also come in rapidly for the increase of pay for certain classes of soldiers. If any increase is made it will be uniform. It is understood that the Military Committee have decided that much, and higher, that they are decidedly favorable to some increase.

NEW YORK, Dec. 19.—The contractors in Charleston harbor were getting the famous floating battery ready to drift in the late gale, and were, through the other obstructions, now now ashore near the northern end of Folly Island.

BOUSEY. The Senate Military Committee has reported in favor of increasing the bounty of \$400 only to the 5th of Jan. 1864; after that to bounty will be allowed substitutes, and only \$100 to drafted or enlisted men.