The Press.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 1862.

THE LATEST WAR NEWS.

The news of the capture of New Orleans by our forces is again confirmed. The Richmond *Dispatch*, of the 28th, states that General Lovell evacuated the city, and withdrew his forces to Camp Moore, on the Jackson Railroad. It is also reported that Hollins' "Turtle"—a second *Merrimac* in its way—has been sunk by the steamer *Pensacola*. The said "Turtle" was supposed by many to be in the neighborhood of Fort Wright, or Pillow, but it now appears that the supposition was unfounded, and that she has gone to the bottom, where the *Merrimac* will surely be before many days have passed.

The news from Yorktown is encouraging. Our fortifications are daily becoming more formidable, and it is expected that Gen. McClellan will open the siege in a day or two. The rebels occasionally fire at our troops building the earthworks, but they do not do any considerable damage. Several rebel batteries have been silenced by our artillery.

We publish to-day three important letters from the New Orleans expedition—two from "Magnolia," and the third from an occasional correspondent. We are thus placed in possession of full and very interesting details of the operation of the fleet to the 11th instant.

Gen. Fremont has determined to clear his department of rebel guerillas, or, in plainer terms, licensed murderers. Governor Letcher, of Virginia, having issued a proclamation, ordering the people in the mountain regions of Virginia to fight in guerilla fashion, numerous bodies of such persons have arisen, and they oftentimes inflict serious damage on our troops. However, Gen. Fremont has taken such measures as will insure the freedom of his department from all cowardly ruffians and assassins. When General Halleck's department was troubled by the same class of outlaws, that General issued an order threatening to hang all such persons, and it was not found necessary to carry the threat into execution. If the same law is applied to the Mountain Department, salutary results will follow.

Two very good letters from Pittsburg Landing, by our special correspondents sojourning at that point, appear in another part of to-day's paper. "Casco" gives us a bit of philosophy about camp cooks, testifies to Halleck's great administrative genius, and to the system which he has evoked among his *corps d'armée*, and records a couple of deserters' stories, either of which would be entertaining if more probable. Our second letter from the same locality describes the graves of the fallen, makes mention of a few epitaphs inscribed by friendly hands, and shows us, in fact, how strangely the calm and silence of the grave-yard has followed the din of the battle-field.

Though the injuries of Lieutenant Worden, commander of the *Monitor*, during his engagement with the *Merrimac*, were severe, they are not likely to deprive the country of his future services. It is expected that he will shortly be able to resume his duties. The subscription started for his benefit some time ago is everywhere met with liberality, and Hon. Edward Everett has issued a strong appeal on behalf of the same laudable purpose.

Should the report that Beauregard has evacuated Corinth prove untrue, the rebel general has but two ways of retreat if defeated by General Halleck—either to Memphis or southward over Eastern Mississippi. If he should retreat southward he will not only keep open his communication with his reserve at Charleston, Augusta, and New Orleans, but subject our pursuing army to all the disadvantages of a malarious climate. Besides, the expense of transportation will become enormous to our army. It is undoubtedly the policy of General Halleck to prevent such a retreat, and we are sure he will be equal to the demands of any proper policy.

From Gen. Halleck's army the news is not very important. Reconnoissances in force are made every day, by which rebel camps are broken up and valuable information gained. Gen. Halleck in a despatch states that Gen. Sherman saved our army at Pittsburg Landing on Sunday the 6th inst., and asks that he be promoted to a major generalship.

We have later news from New Mexico, and we are glad to learn affairs in that Territory wear a more promising aspect. Colonels Slough and Canby had made a junction, and were at Galestro on the 11th instant, and the Texans were thirty miles south of that place, in full retreat from the Territory. It is thought that our troops will capture the whole rebel force. The rebels have also abandoned Santa Fé.

Congress Yesterday.

SENATE.—Bills were reported from the Military Committee, to create bureaus of clothing and transportation. A bill was introduced to provide for sum raised by the school-tax of the District with the [illegible] children of colored citizens. As an amendment to the bill confiscating slaves, passed last session, Mr. Wilson introduced a bill extending its provisions to the wives and children of slaves. Mr. Browning, of Illinois, expressed his opposition to the confiscation bill, regarding its passage as incompatible with the interests of the country.

HOUSE.—The first important business transacted was a difference of opinion between Messrs. Washburne and Conkling, which culminated in the former gentleman calling the latter a *creature!* This episode doubtless created a tremendous sensation—the second sensation the House has had within the present month. A tedious discussion, upon the report of the committee on Government contracts followed. Pending a motion to table the matter, the House adjourned.

ALL DOUBTS of the surrender of New Orleans are dissipated, by the official announcement, in the Richmond *Dispatch*, of the withdrawal of the rebel army, and its occupation by the Union forces. The consternation at the Secession capital may be more easily imagined than described. Its own doom is foreshadowed by this intelligence. Glancing at the disasters that thicken round every link in the conspiracy, its leaders behold all the pillars of the Southern Confederacy glide away, like the baseless fabric of a dream.

Now that full descriptions of the formidable expedition sent against New Orleans by our Government are published, the public will readily understand how this brilliant success was achieved. The task which all the boasted wealth, genius, and valor of Great Britain could not accomplish has proved a comparatively easy one to our noble fleet. When it is considered that since PACKENHAM'S army was driven back, defeated and disgraced, by General JACKSON, the population and wealth of New Orleans have greatly increased, and that millions of money have been expended to strengthen its fortifications, and to surround it with new defences, it is clear that we had greater relative obstacles to contend with than the invaders of the last war. Our success, then, is a virtual triumph, both over Secession and its British sympathizers. John Bull will learn that where he encountered one of his sorest reverses, we achieved one of our most splendid triumphs. If he attributes it to the weakness of the traitors, he should resign all his hopes of a destruction of the Union; if he acknowledges our superior strength, he should learn to respect the power he has been accustomed to deride. Abroad, this victory will, if possible, do more to increase our national prestige than at home. It will destroy the last hope of the rebel ambassadors of obtaining a recognition of their bogus Confederacy. A pretended government that fails to defend any point that is vigorously assailed, and that cannot even shield its metropolis, will be despised by those who were anxious to befriend it. The capture of New Orleans will prove as decisive an event of this war as the failure of the British to capture it was in 1815. And if the general expectation of McCLELLAN'S success at Yorktown be realized, his movements there may exercise as potent an influence as the capture of CORNWALLIS did in 1781.

THE THREE CABINET OFFICERS of the last Administration, who, in its closing hours, displayed a zealous attachment to the country are now all, at the request of Mr. LINCOLN, filling high and responsible stations. Mr. STANTON is Secretary of War; Mr. HOLT is one of the commissioners appointed to examine war claims against the Government; Mr. DIX is one of the Major Generals of our army. A more striking proof of the desire of the President to ignore party dissensions in the administration of the Government, and to rally to its support the truly patriotic of all the old parties, could not have been given.

Our National Defences.

The report on our national defences, presented to Congress a few days ago by Hon. F. P. BLAIR, chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, contains many interesting statements and valuable suggestions. We published on the 24th inst., in our Washington despatches, a brief enumeration of the measures deemed necessary to render our coast invulnerable. Three national systems have been tried. The first, commenced in 1789, after the breaking out of the French Revolution, and the second commenced prior to the War of 1812, are now entirely useless. The third, commenced in 1816, is not now entirely effective against the appliances of modern warfare, and there is an evident necessity for numerous improvements. To exclude from our harbors hostile ships, including armored vessels, heavy guns, capable of throwing balls weighing half a ton, the erection of new iron-clad forts, and armoring with iron the old forts, as well as *Monitors*, steam-rams, and other new inventions, are deemed worthy of consideration.

It is also proposed to adopt measures to detain, as long as possible, any enemy that may attempt to assail important points on our seacoast, and to increase the facilities of internal communication, which assist in concentrating at any threatened locality an immense body of soldiers. Fortunately, private enterprise and State legislation have supplied internal avenues of railroad and canal communication proportioned to the commercial and military importance of nearly all our great cities; and, though they were intended chiefly for peaceful purposes, they are not less valuable, as the experience of the present war demonstrates, for defensive and offensive operations, in time of war. The leading exceptions to this general rule are furnished by our Northern and our Pacific coasts. By a cunningly-devised treaty stipulation, Great Britain has prohibited us from building war vessels on the Northern lakes; and while she has erected a deep canal around Niagara Falls, which would enable her to employ her immense naval armament in the destruction of our lake trade and lake towns, we have no means of sending our gunboats or war vessels to the rescue. The committee state this startling proposition (which would have proved of fearful significance if war had resulted from the Mason-Slidell imbroglio), and the proposed remedy, as follows:

"Occupied by our own vast commercial enterprises and by violent party conflicts, our people failed to notice, at the time, that *the safety of our entire northern frontier had been destroyed by the digging of two short canals*. Near the head of the St. Lawrence, (at the foot of Lake Ontario,) the British, *to complete their supremacy on the lakes*, have built a large naval depot for the ingress and egress and repair of vessels, and a very strong fortress to protect the depot and the outlet of the lake—a fort which cannot be reduced, it is supposed by them, except by regular approaches. They have also strong defences of the St. Lawrence at Montreal, Quebec, &c., to make the all-important channel as safe as possible to the ingress and egress of their fleets. As things now are, *a British fleet could sail from the ocean into the lakes, devastate the cities upon the shores, seize the commercial vessels on their waters*, and then, in a few days, appear off Boston, New York, or New Orleans, to aid in operations against us on the ocean frontier. To place our frontier in like good condition, the United States must possess the means to follow an enemy's fleet from one lake to another with like ease and certainty. We must have a naval depot of corresponding extent, as well secured, and as judiciously located for commercial as well as warlike purposes. In addition to these, we should have defences at the entrance of the lakes which will effectually command them; on the St. Lawrence should be fortifications (aided by floating batteries, if necessary) competent to control the channel, however numerous the hostile fleet.

"To defend the northern frontier, the United States should be able to send a strong fleet on the lakes as soon as an opponent. We should have adequate means of transportation at command to be able to speedily concentrate on the St. Lawrence a force of acknowledged competency to take possession of the canal and of Montreal, and hold them. The possession by the United States of the outlets of Lake Champlain and of Montreal and its communications, would cut off all supplies from the Canadians, and leave them to an unsupported and hopeless conflict with all our forces. Such a conflict could be neither protracted nor dangerous."

It is suggested that if the Erie and Hudson canal can be so "enlarged as to allow the passage of a vessel of fifteen hundred or even of two thousand tons burden," we can remedy this glaring defect in our northern line of defences; and that if an American canal around the Niagara Falls is built, a complete chain of water communication with the Northwest, and, by an enlargement of the Illinois river and Lake Michigan canal, with New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico, can be established. In referring to these canals and other important links spoken of, the committee do not recommend appropriations by Congress to complete them. They refer to their probable usefulness for peaceful as well as for warlike purposes, and express the opinion that the enterprise of individuals, having already accomplished so much, may be expected to do much more, "where nature has done so great a share" of the work of rendering our coast secure.

The early construction of a good and reliable railroad from the Missouri river to the bay of San Francisco is recommended as an important preparation for the defence of the Pacific coast.

A good supply of skilful and learned military and naval officers is deemed indispensable. The committee think it "may be safely affirmed, in general terms, that twice as many as we have heretofore educated will be wanted hereafter." A proposition to permit parents and guardians to educate, at their own expense, young men of promising talents at the United States military and naval academies is suggested for consideration.

The defenceless condition of our country at the outbreak of the rebellion is strikingly shown by the fact that we had then "scarcely one thousand soldiers east of the Mississippi river," our entire army, with this insignificant exception, being engaged in protecting our Territories and distant Western outposts. The necessity of greater precautions, and of a much stronger regular force, even in time of profound peace, is clearly evident.

OF ALL the miscreants and traitors among the leaders of the rebels, the braggart who signs himself JOHN BANKHEAD MAGRUDER stands prominent. His address to his soldiers at Yorktown, which we print in another column, is crowded with falsehoods and calumnies. In reading it, it is almost impossible to realize that MAGRUDER is the same man who, a little more than a year ago, was parading the streets of Washington boasting of his loyalty, and swearing that he never would leave the flag. He had been pampered and spoiled under Mr. BUCHANAN'S Administration. First permitted to revel at the expense of the treasury in foreign countries, and afterwards placed in command of the barracks at Newport, Rhode Island, where he lived in a style of princely luxury, he went over to the rebellion with a lie in his throat and perjury written on his brow. And this is the "Major General Commanding" of the forces opposed to Gen. MCCLELLAN at Yorktown! A creature thus debased, a fellow who has made his infamy a boast, and his treason the scorn of all honorable men, now prates of "the wrongs of the Southern people," "of the yoke of the oppressor," and "of freemen who know their rights and dare to defend them." "We will yet," he says, in the conclusion of his address, "strike down our ruthless invaders amid the smoking ruins of their cities, and with arms in our hands dictate terms of peace on their own soil." MAGRUDER is the fitting chief of a reckless and conscienceless rebellion. A bloated aristocrat, a pompous Gascon, a self-convicted liar and ingrate, how far can his example or his words inspire the men he asks to follow him?

Punch's American Cartoon.

Owing to the seizure of English pictorial and literary journals by the custom-house officers of New York, we have lately been on the shortest supply of these publications. The last number of *Punch*, (April 5), which we have seen, has a full-page cartoon, entitled "Oberon and Titania," the idea of which is taken from a Midsummer Night's Dream. A fair and scornful lady, in very scanty attire, (the heathen divinities, eschewed crinoline,) holds by the hand, with firm grasp, a diminutive "contraband," which she determinedly refuses to surrender at the request of Oberon, wearing a star-studded tunic and Phrygian cap, his wand star-crowned, and a sprinkling of stars upon his wings. He is marvellously like MR. LINCOLN. The dialogue at foot runs thus:

Oberon—(Mr. President Lincoln)—"I do but beg a little *nigger* boy, to be my henchman."

Titania—(Miss Virginia)—"Set your heart at rest, the *Northern* land buys not this child of me."

LOYAL BLACKS FOR THE FORTS.—Several officers of Port Royal, among them the colonel of a Pennsylvania regiment, write in hearty approval of the suggestion made by Senator Grimes, that the forts ought to be garrisoned by loyal blacks. The colonel says that he would like to raise a regiment of blacks in Philadelphia with which to garrison Southern forts. He promises to do it in ten days after he is empowered.

LETTER FROM "OCCASIONAL."

WASHINGTON, April 29, 1862.

As we reflect upon the occupation of the city of New Orleans by the army of the United States, we find it a fact difficult to realize. If there is any one point upon the defence of which the traitors should have risked everything, it was New Orleans, and having lost that great prize their best course is to prepare for the inevitable consequences. Surpassing all the cities of the South in the wealth, refinement, and progressive spirit of its people, its geographical position, near the mouth of the Mississippi, has made it the grand *entrepôt* for an incalculable interior trade, and the receptacle for an immense commerce with other nations. Connected with all the leading ports North and South, with Texas and Mexico, the loss of New Orleans to the rebellion is the loss equally of its head and its heart. New Orleans is, to the whole cotton country, what Paris is to France. The residence of opulent sugar, rice, and cotton planters, its banks have been among the richest of the Union, its theatre and opera house not surpassed by those of New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, and its hotels famous over the world for their magnificence and luxury. That city in our possession, it may be reasonably inferred that the whole Mississippi river will speedily fall into our hands. This, with the seizure of its railroad connections, will not only enable us to checkmate the military operations of the enemy, but, by preventing his escape into Texas, render the capture of his forces comparatively easy. Then the enormous navy and army in the waters and on the adjacent soil can soon be despatched to other quarters, thus hastening the overwhelming catastrophe. The French minister stated yesterday to a Senator that if this intelligence was verified, the head of the rebellion was crushed. In no city of the South has there been a more conscientious and courageous loyal sentiment than in New Orleans. It was there that Stephen A. Douglas made his last great speech, two days after the Presidential election of 1860; there that he admonished them of the consequences of the Breckinridge treason; and there that he was welcomed by an unprecedented popular uprising. As the conspiracy developed itself, this sentiment was gradually and forcibly suppressed. Even Pierre Soulé was compelled to yield; but so irrepressible was the love of country in the minds and hearts of the people that now and then it would burst out and proclaim itself in the teeth of the traitors. No people have suffered more in consequence of the rebellion than the people of Louisiana and New Orleans, and when the full accounts shall have been received, it will appear that their old affection for the Constitution and the Union is comparatively undiminished, and that the atrocities of their betrayers have well prepared them for the restoration of that authority which they reluctantly abandoned. I understand that the Administration has taken the precaution to reassert the Federal power in such manner as will convince the masses of its forgiving and magnanimous disposition. It will be a splendid opportunity for one of our statesmen warriors to send abroad to all the adjoining States this healthy assurance. When Foote and Farragut shall meet at Vicksburg and Memphis the good work will be more than half accomplished, and when a line of war steamers is established with Galveston and the Mexican ports along the Gulf; when trade is again reopened with Philadelphia, New York, and Boston, the hunted, impoverished, and deluded people will lift their hands in thanksgiving, and the traitors will hasten to flee the coming wrath. The collapse of the so-called Confederacy will unveil the details by which the conspiracy was enabled to maintain itself, and will startle the whole civilized world. The President, in commenting last evening upon the capture of New Orleans, took occasion to repeat his confidence in the speedy restoration of the Union. If the rebels will not surrender, they will be doomed to a terrible retribution; and if they yield, there will be no exhibition of revenge or of retaliation, save that which offended justice, as against the chiefs of the revolt, may demand. There are so many means now at the disposal of the Government to force a surrender, so many reasons for indulgence to a misguided people, and so many vast interests that would be encouraged by such a result, that you need not be surprised if the conversion of the Southern masses to the old flag should be as sudden and as sincere as their submission to the rebel rule was rapid. If other nations were amazed at the progress of this conspiracy, they will be wonder-stricken at the manner in which it is about to be put down.

OCCASIONAL.

Highly Interesting from the New Orleans Expedition.

Account of the Hartford's Trip—Arrival at the Southwest Pass—Strength and Description of the Fleet—The Mortar Schooners—Preparations for Action—Howitzers in the Fore and Main Tops—Obstacles to be Met and Overcome.

UNITED STATES STEAMER HARTFORD,
HEAD OF THE PASSES MISSISSIPPI RIVER,
April 11, 1862.

EDITOR OF THE PRESS: We left Philadelphia on the 19th of January, Fort Royal (S. C.) on the 6th February, Key West on the 15th, and Havana on the 17th, and arrived at Ship Island on the 20th. At Ship Island we blew up our port boiler, and repaired it again. We reached Pass a l'Outre on the 7th of March, Southwest Pass on the 11th, came up here in chase of two rebel gunboats on the 15th, and have been lying here ever since. By the 1st of May, I expect to eat dinner at the St. Charles Hotel, New Orleans. We are the flag ship of a fleet of over seventy vessels, among which are the *Brooklyn*, *Pensacola*, *Richmond*, *Iroquois*, *Oneida*, *Wissahickon*, *Panola*, *Kennebec*, and some eighteen or twenty other gunboats, together with Porter's mortar fleet, consisting of twenty-right schooners, each armed with a 13-inch mortar, having a range of 4,200 yards. The shells from these mortars weigh, when empty, two hundred and ten pounds. The firing charge is twenty pounds, and the bursting charge ten pounds. Two hundred shells can be kept in the air constantly, and after three shots they get the range so exactly that they can drop them all in one spot.

For the last two weeks the ship has been undergoing the preparations for action. Her top-gallant masts, with all the rigging belonging to them, have been sent ashore, all railings are taken down, the forecastle has been filled with sand bags, a howitzer has been placed in the fore and main tops, twenty-one 9-inch guns on the spar-deck, and two rifled Parrott guns on the poop deck.

The objections which the enemy interposes to our passage up the river take the shape of two forts—Fort St. Philip and Fort Jackson—which are on each side of the river about twenty miles above this place, with a distance of one and a quarter miles between them. One of them is casemated. They mount upwards of one hundred guns each, some of them rifled 80-pounders, and are so situated that a vessel coming up the river is subjected to *a raking fire for a distance of three miles before she is able to use her broadside guns*. And to this, a huge chain stretched across the river, one thousand yards below the forts, supported on six schooners and a raft, swept by a battery at one end; and numerous rams, fire-ships, and other infernal machines, completely with the chances of getting aground, and you have a tolerably fair idea of what we must pass through before the stars and stripes shall wave over the Crescent City.

THE LATE LAWRENCE PETERSON, ESQ.—For private circulation only, In Memoriam, has been printed a Sermon preached in the Green Hill Church, Philadelphia, on Sunday, April 13, 1862, occasioned by the death of Lawrence Peterson, Esq., by Rev. Frank L. Robbins, Pastor of the church. Mr. Peterson (elder brother of C. J. Peterson, Esq., and of T. B. Peterson and Brothers, 306 Chestnut street) displayed talent, probity, and enterprise as a leading member of the eminent silk house of Yard, Gillmore, & Co., of this city, and few have died more respected and beloved. Mr. Robbins' sermon is a a touching tribute to his memory as a Man, a Merchant, and a Christian.

LARGE SPECIAL SALE OF THE STOCK OF A WHOLESALE HOUSE.—We invite the early attention of purchasers to the large and varied assortment of hosiery, gloves, hankerchiefs, skirts, ribbons, trimmings, threads, buttons, notions, and fancy goods, comprising the stock of an extensive wholesale house, declining business—embracing about 1,000 lots of staple and fancy articles—to be peremptorily sold, by catalogue, on a credit of four months, commencing this morning at 10 o'clock, and to be continued, without intermission, all day and part of the evening, by John B. Myers & Co., auctioneers, Nos. 232 and 234 Market street.

MR J. E. HILYARD, of the Coast Survey Department, at Washington, has our thanks for a valuable official map of the Georgian coast.

THE MOUNTAIN DEPARTMENT.

WHEELING, April 29.—A trusty scout, sent by General Milroy, went within seven miles of Staunton, where he found a rebel cavalry company, and learned that General Johnston, shortly after leaving the Shenandoah mountain, was ordered back; but he replied that its occupation by 10,000 "Yankees" rendered it impossible for him to do so. He was then ordered to join General Jackson east of the Blue Ridge, which was being rapidly done.

The same scout reports the loss of a foraging party twelve miles from General McDowall's lines. While water-bound it was attacked by guerillas and the wagons and horses destroyed. Some of the men were badly wounded and some killed.

HARPER and BARNETT, two notorious guerillas have been sent to Wheeling.

Major McKey, of the Garibaldi Guards, in Blenker's division, died on Sunday.

FROM WASHINGTON.

The Arrest of Gen. Stone Ordered by the President.

Reason for Delaying his Trial Stated.

FOREIGN CONTRACTS FOR ORDNANCE REJECTED.

Proposals for More Arms Issued.

BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION PROPOSED.

Provisions of the Bill.

A NEW CONFISCATION MEASURE.

Special Despatches to "The Press."

WASHINGTON, April 29, 1862.

The War in Tennessee—A Cavalry Skirmish.

The following was received to-day at the War Department:

SEVEN MILES FROM MONTBREY, TENN., April 28.—Five companies of our cavalry had a skirmish with the enemy's cavalry two miles in advance. The enemy retreated with five killed, one of them a major.

Eighteen prisoners, with their horses and arms, were captured, and are now in our camp. One of the prisoners, named VAUGHAN, was formerly foreman in the office of the Louisville *Democrat*. We had one man wounded but none killed. Our forces are in capital spirits. The prisoners say the enemy have upwards of eighty thousand men at Corinth, and will fight. They are busy entrenching and mounting large guns.

The President on Gen. Stone's Case—The President Ordered the Arrest.

The President has sent a communication to the Senate in reply to the resolution calling on him for information relating to the arrest and imprisonment of Gen STONE. He states that he ordered the arrest of Gen. STONE, and the reason why he was not tried ere this, was because the witnesses in the case were before Yorktown. This will therefore settle this question for the present.

The Evacuation of Jacksonville.

Several days ago the House passed a resolution directing the Secretary of War to communicate all the facts and circumstances, within his knowledge, relative to the late evacuation, by our troops, of Jacksonville, Florida. The Secretary replies that he conceives it to be the province of the President to furnish information concerning military operations; but the President had directed him to say that the evacuation was for reasons not deemed compatible with the public interests to disclose.

Ordnance Contracts.

The commission on ordnance and ordnance supplies, has, it is said, rejected all the foreign contracts, and considerably curtailed those for the manufacture of arms in the United States.

The Ordnance Office has issued proposals for manufacturing, within one year, Springfield rifle muskets, Harper's Ferry rifles, together with revolvers, carbines, sabre swords and scabbards. The Department reserves to itself the right to reject any bid, and will consider none made through any agent, broker, or party other than the regular manufacturers.

The Emancipation Commission.

The Emancipation Commissioners met to-day. Several petitions were filed, and during the morning thirty or forty persons waited on the Board for information regarding the mode of procedure.

The Commander of the Stevens Battery.

Secretary WELLES has ordered Lieutenant ROBINSON to the command of the battery *E. A. Stevens*, commonly, but erroneously, called the *Naugatuck*, at Fortress Monroe.

Payment of Public Indebtedness.

The Secretary of the Treasury is now prepared to pay all indebtedness of a date prior to the 1st of February, four per centum in cash, and of a subsequent date thirty per centum in cash.

Deposits on Temporary Loans.

Deposits on temporary loan account have been received from the New York Clearing House banks at 5 per centum interest, because the certificates of deposit are used by these banks in the transactions of the Clearing House, and the deposits are, therefore, of a more permanent character than those of the other banks and individuals, who are allowed only 4 per centum. This discrimination will, however, be continued only during the present week, when the rate for all depositors will be made uniform at 4 per centum, inasmuch as it seems certain that, even at that rate, the limit of fifty millions fixed by law will very soon be reached.

Naval Appointments.

The Navy Department has appointed JOSIAH HUNTRESS acting master's mate, and ordered him to the Potomac flotilla.

WILLIAM RICH HOEL is appointed acting volunteer lieutenant in Flag Officer FOOTE'S flotilla.

Lieutenant THOMAS H. STEVENS is ordered to report to Flag Officer GOLDSBOROUGH for the command of the *Havatanza*.

Acting Master's Mate WILLIAM M. MESSER is promoted to the grade of acting master, and ordered to the United States steam gunboat *Paul Jones*.

The appointment of Lieutenant, published today, was all for acting masters, and not acting paymasters, as erroneously stated. None of the latter grade are now being made.

The Coast Survey.

Professor BACHE, of the Coast Survey, reports that next to Port Royal, St. Helena sound is the best harbor on the Southern coast. Two channels of 17 feet water each enter it, and from the sound, the country may be penetrated nearly to the railroad. The width of the sound renders all the shores healthy, as all are freely reached by the sea breeze; and Otter Island, especially, is finely situated for a settlement and commercial town. If over other interests than planting ones rule in this region, he looks to see its commercial advantages made use of, and the lumber from the lands of the Ashepo and Combahee find a market near those great rivers, than either Charleston or Savannah.

The House Committee on Confiscation.

Representative ELIOT, of Massachusetts, is chairman of the select committee on the confiscation of rebel property, being now first in the order of appointment, the House having excused Mr. OLIN from service on the committee, and to which Mr. SEDGWICK was added to day.

Bureau of Transportation.

The Senate Military Committee, to-day, reported a bill establishing in the Quartermaster's Department a Bureau of Transportation, to consist of one colonel, one lieutenant colonel, two majors, and six captains, to be appointed from among the regular and volunteer forces. It is the duty of the chief of this bureau, when directed by the Secretary of War, or Quartermaster General, to purchase, or hire the necessary means of transport by land or water, and to perform such other duties as are connected with army transportation. Bonds are required of the officers, and any speculation in contracts incurs the penalty of prompt dismissal from the army. Provision is made that, if this bureau is abolished after the rebellion, the regular army officers can resume their old positions. It is understood that this bill meets with the approval of General MEIGS, Quartermaster General.

Mail Messengers in Delaware.

Mr. D. W. DE HAVEN is to-day appointed mail messenger to supply the post office at Newark from railroad, in place of C. W. ORTLIPP. Mr. DE HAVEN has also received the contract for supplying Cooch's Bridge and Glasgow from Newark, three times a week, vice G. W. ORTLIPP.

IN VIRGINIA.

The Postmaster General has ordered a contract with Mr. SAMUEL KING, of Fredericksburg Court House, for conveying the mails from Jackson Court House by Angerona to Cottageville.

The Slave Trade Treaty.

The SEWARD-LYONS treaty was approved by the Senate without scarce any objection, yet within the last twenty years this country and England have been at swords' points upon the subject of the right of search. The discussions in Congress have been interminable, and Senators have rivalled each other in resisting the idea of the right of search, even if neutral. It seems, by a statement of the *Intelligencer*, that such a treaty was negotiated by the Monroe Administration, though it fell through, on account of the amendment proposed by the Senate, which was, that the right of search should not be exercised in American waters. Mr. ADAMS once stated in Congress, that though he negotiated the treaty upon the directions of President MONROE, he was opposed to it, while Mr. CALHOUN was in its favor.

New Confiscation Measure.

Mr. WILSON also introduced a bill to-day, in the Senate, providing that the fourth section of the "act to confiscate property used for insurrectionary purposes, approved August 6, 1861," be so amended as to include the wives and minor children of persons claimed to be held to labor or service under the laws of any State, who may be confiscated under the original act.

Colored Schools in the District of Columbia.

Mr. GRIMES introduced a bill to day, in the Senate, providing that the usual ten-per-cent. assessment on property, for the school fund here, be so applied from taxes on property owned by colored people as to support schools for their use, in the same manner as the tax is assessed for free white schools.

Bureau of Clothing for the Army.

The Senate Military Committee to-day reported a bill establishing in the Quartermaster's Department a Bureau of Clothing, to consist of one colonel, one lieutenant colonel, one major, and four captains, to be appointed by the President, from among the officers of the regular army and volunteers, whose rank, pay, and emoluments shall be, respectively, the same as now allowed by law to other officers of the same grade in the Quartermaster's department, or he may also select a civilian, in his discretion.

It is the duty of the chief of the Bureau of Clothing and his subordinates, when directed by the Secretary of War or Quartermaster General, to provide the necessary clothing and camp and garrison equipage for the army, and turn it over, upon proper requisitions, to the officers of the army charged with transporting and issuing it to the troops, and to perform all such duties connected with the clothing of the army as may be directed by the Secretary of War or the Quartermaster General. And the officers shall give bonds, as now required by law, and shall be subject to existing regulations for the care and accountability of property, and to all other army regulations not conflicting with the provisions of this act. And no officer of the Bureau of Clothing shall be concerned, directly or indirectly, in any contract, on pain of dismissal. Provision is made that the regular army officers can return to their old positions when the bureau is abolished.

Discharge of Disabled Soldiers.

Mr. WILSON introduced a bill in the Senate, to-day, providing that the medical inspector general, or any medical inspector, is authorized to discharge from the service any soldier laboring under any physical disability which makes it disadvantageous to the service for him to be retained; and the certificate, in writing, of such inspector shall be sufficient evidence of discharge, provided it be the result of a personal examination. Such discharge shall be without prejudice to the right of such soldier to the pay due him at its date.

The Agricultural Division Patent Office.

This important branch of the Government being in receipt of fourteen hundred bushels of cotton seed from Newbern, North Carolina, this morning put on over a hundred females in packing, so that, with the least possible delay, the entire invoice may be distributed to members of Congress, agricultural societies, and energetic tillers of the soil, for experiment.

FROM FORTRESS MONROE DIRECT.

Rebel Announcement of the Occupation of New Orleans.

WASHINGTON, April 29.—A despatch from Fortress Monroe to-day, dated 1 o'clock P. M., says that all was quiet, the weather, pleasant, and no news.

FORTRESS MONROE, April 29.—To the Hon. Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War: The following appears in the Richmond *Dispatch* of the 28th instant: "The fearful state of suspense in which this city has existed for two or three days, has at last ended. *New Orleans is in the possession of the enemy.* It was evacuated by Gen. Lovell, who removed his forces to Camp Moore, on the Jackson Railroad." JOHN E. WOOL,
Major General.

FORTRESS MONROE, April 28.—The weather and tide to-day were very favorable for the reappearance of the *Merrimac* in Hampton Roads, but she still delays coming.

It is reported that some of the rebel gunboats in the James river, attempted this forenoon to shell some of our camps this side of Warwick river.

FORTRESS MONROE, April 28.—A flag of truce took despatches and some packages of letters for the Union prisoners.

No news or papers were received, or at least none came into the hands of the press correspondents.

The city of New Orleans has been taken by the Union forces. The telegraph operators having left there, as previously reported, no particulars have been received. It is stated, however, that the operators subsequently attempted to return, but found the city in the possession of the United States troops. It is probable that the city surrendered without resistance, on the appearance of the fleet.

There is a report that the much-bragged-of iron gunboat built there—a second *Merrimac* in its way—was destroyed by the United States steamer *Pensacola*.

From General McClellan's Army.

ACTIVE CANNONADING BY THE REBELS.

THE REBELS REPULSED IN A SKIRMISH, AND A BATTERY SILENCED.

THE GUNS DISMOUNTED.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
BEFORE YORKTOWN, April 29, 1862.

The rebels are apparently just realising the fact that General McClellan is making extensive preparations to open the second siege of Yorktown. Up to yesterday the works of our troops have steadily progressed, directly under the eyes of the enemy, without any response from their guns, excepting an occasional shot sent to inform us that they were still there. Our earthworks are now beginning to present a very formidable appearance to the enemy, and all day yesterday and last night they kept up a brisk fire on them, with the view of driving the men out. Occasionally, a shell would come so close as to make it unpleasant, when they would lie close to the ground until it had passed over. No one was injured, and the work progressed as though no enemy was within range.

This morning the rebels opened with increased vigor for about three hours from their batteries near the river, but receiving no response they ceased.

Yesterday Gen. Hancock went out with a portion of his brigade for the purpose of driving the enemy from a piece of timber which they occupied in too close proximity to our works. Our troops advanced through an open field on their hands and knees until they came within close musket range. The rebels, who were secreted behind stumps and trees, were anxious to get our men upon their feet.

To endeavor and to accomplish this, the captain in command of the enemy shouted at the height of his voice to "charge bayonets," supposing that our frightened troops would instantly jump to their feet and run, but they were mistaken in the men. The command being given in Dutch, the rebels arose, when our troops poured into them a well-directed fire, causing them to retreat, leaving their dead and wounded to be cared for afterwards. During the skirmish a new battery, which the rebels had erected during Sunday night, and which interfered with a working party of our men, was most effectually silenced and the guns dismounted.

The weather is warm, and favorable for military operations. The time is drawing close when the commanding general will commence the task of reducing the enemy's works erected to impede the advance of the Union troops. All are sanguine as to the result, and the troops are eager to be led forward.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
April 23, 11 A. M.

To the Hon. EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War:

Nothing of interest transpired during the night. No firing on our right, where the work proceeded undisturbed.

On the left the enemy fired a good deal, but hurt no one, nor was the work interrupted. I have just sent a heavy field battery to silence a gun or two of the enemy that have been impertinent this morning, but have hurt no one.

The weather has improved, and we are making good progress. G. B. MCCLELLAN,
Major General Commanding.

FROM PITTSBURG LANDING.

PITTSBURG LANDING, April 29.—Heavy rains fell last night, and the roads are again in bad condition.

Brigadier General Colburn, chief of staff and engineer, has just arrived from the Mississippi river, where he has been engaged placing the defences of that river.

From Gen. Halleck's Army.

CAMP NEAR PITTSBURG, Tenn., April 29.

To the Hon. EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War:

Gen. Pope sent a force to Monterey this morning. The enemy fled. Our forces took fifteen prisoners, some baggage, and supplies. We destroyed their encampment, and returned to camp in good order.

There is a reconnoissance out to explore the country to Farmington. No news has been received from it yet.

Our army is greatly rejoiced to hear of the capture of New Orleans. THOMAS A. SCOTT,
Assistant Secretary of War.

Despatch from General Halleck.

WASHINGTON, April 29—The following was recently received in this city:

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF MISSISSIPPI,
PITTSBURG, Tenn., April 13, 1862.

To the Hon. EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War:

SIR: It is the unanimous opinion here that Brigadier General W. T. Sherman saved the fortune of the day on the 6th, and contributed largely to the glorious victory of the 7th. He was in the thickest of the fight on both days, having had three horses killed under him, and being surrounded twice. I respectfully request that he be made a major general of volunteers, to date from the 6th instant. Very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
H. W. HALLECK,
Major General Commanding.

Another Confirmation of the Fall of New Orleans.

PITTSBURG LANDING, April 29.—There was some heavy firing across Lick Creek this morning, caused by artillery practice with the rebels by our advance guards, who, after slight skirmishing, in which we captured several prisoners, occupied Pea Ridge, and at 9 o'clock occupied Monterey, twelve or fourteen miles from Corinth.

A very intelligent sailor, formerly of Boston, who deserted from the rebels this side of Corinth, reports that the capture of New Orleans was generally known in the rebel camps on the morning of the 27th instant. He also states that, on the 18th, the time of two of the Louisiana regiments, that were enlisted for twelve months, expired, but, by the new conscript law, they were required to serve two years longer.

On being so informed, both regiments laid down their arms and refused to fight, when Beauregard detailed four regiments to guard them as prisoners.

It was not known that General Halleck was in command here, but it was the general impression that General Buell was at the head, and that our army was returning to Nashville.

Col. J. C. Kelton, A. A. G., arrived here to-day, relieving Capt. McLenn, who was obliged to go to Cincinnati on account of ill health.

LOUISVILLE, April 29.—One hundred and seven prisoners, captured by Gen. Mitchell at Huntsville, arrived here to-night, *en route* for Camp Chase.

FROM NEW MEXICO.

The Federal Forces form a Junction.

THE TEXANS ROUTED AND RETREATING.

WASHINGTON, April 29.—The following was received here to-day: