The Press.

TUESDAY, MAY 6, 1862.

THE LATEST WAR NEWS.

Further particulars of the capture of Yorktown, and the flight and pursuit of the rebels, will be found in another column. It is supposed that General McClellan has captured over 100 cannon, and immense quantities of ammunition, stores, &c. Our cavalry and artillery came up with the rear guard of the rebels at Williamsburg on Monday afternoon, and a brisk fight immediately ensued. It was a hand-to-hand encounter between the Federal and rebel cavalry. The latter were driven from the field, but for want of enough infantry our troops were unable to advance on the rebel entrenchments. Night coming on, it was deemed advisable to defer further operations until yesterday. The telegraph does not state whether the action was resumed yesterday or not.

One of our attentive correspondents, with General McClellan's army, sends us a very graphic letter, describing the scenes attending the evacuation of Yorktown, and the advance of our army. From his intelligent narrative, we are enabled to appreciate more fully the masterly strategy of General McClellan in driving the enemy from the Peninsula of Virginia.

Jeff Davis' coachman—so a letter from the Rappahannock says—has seen fit to take "French" leave of his master and come within the lines of the Union army. The coachman, it is said, was very communicative to our officers, and imparted some of the secrets of the rebel chieftain's family that would not likely be known to anybody, save the person whose story is recorded in our telegraphic columns. The coachman was accustomed occasionally to drive Mr. Jefferson Davis and his lady out, and, if we may believe him, the couple had occasional discussions about the merits of the Confederacy and that Mrs. Davis stated that said Confederacy was "played out." It is also stated that Jeff Davis wished Johnston to make a stand at Manassas, but the latter declined, and was even indisposed to go to Yorktown.

As the Union troops approach nearer to Richmond the Union people of that city become more emboldened toward their rebel persecutors.

Affairs in East Tennessee, as we have heretofore intimated, are in a most deplorable condition. The rebel State Legislature, at Memphis, having passed a conscription act, thousands of Union citizens of that section have begun to flee into Kentucky to escape its operations. On the 16th ult., the Knoxville *Register*—a Secession sheet—states that some eight hundred of these refugees left their homes to find in a loyal State an asylum from oppression. They carried with them the implements of honest labor, proposing to gain a livelihood in peace, if possible; but a portion of them were armed to resist any attack that might be made. Nevertheless, they were pursued by a body of rebel cavalry, under command of an infamous Colonel Ashby, and after an engagement of an hour, during which they heroically defended themselves, they were compelled to succumb. At least a hundred of them, according to the rebel statement, were killed or wounded, and four hundred and twenty-three made prisoners. The latter were carried back to Knoxville in triumph, to be subjected to the pitiless scoffs of heartless traitors, who had formerly been their fellow-citizens, and are probably at this time enduring the tortures of the dungeon. The same paper states that among the prisoners taken were many prominent men of that section. So great has been the stampede of loyalists from East Tennessee that the rebel General Kirby Smith, commanding the department, at the instance of Jeff Davis, had issued an order declaring martial law, and calling upon the people to remain at their homes, to cultivate their fields, and to be true in their allegiance to the "existing" government, holding forth, as an inducement, the promise to suspend the military draft. East Tennessee, surrounded on almost every side by traitors, has thus far withstood the torrent of treason and lawlessness nobly. As in the case of Western Virginia, its efforts should meet with such an encouragement on the part of the Government, that not a traitor will dare avow disloyal sentiments within its borders.

Congress Yesterday.

SENATE.—The bill to regulate the number of major and brigadier generals was laid over. A bill to donate public lands to States and Territories endowing agricultural colleges, was referred. A resolution favoring a general exchange of prisoners was referred. The homestead bill was taken up, but a vote was postponed till to-day. The confiscation bill was taken up, and speeches made by Messrs. Howe and Foster. The Senate then went into executive session.

HOUSE.—The bill amendatory of the act to provide increased revenue from the imports, to pay the interest on the public debt, and for other purposes, was passed. The House resolved itself into Committee of the Whole on the Pacific Railroad bill, which was debated by Messrs. F. A. Conkling and others.

The Plans of the Conspirators.

Such a succession of victories have lately crowned the efforts of the Union armies that, in any ordinary contest between two independent nations, similar triumphs would inevitably compel the vanquished country to sue for peace. At every contested point the Secessionists have been defeated. They have been entirely driven from Missouri and Kentucky. Compelled to evacuate their old stronghold at Manassas, they fell back upon what they supposed was a still stronger position, at Yorktown, but the preparations for besieging it were so formidable that they saw resistance was hopeless, and, without waiting for our final onset, their main army precipitately fled. The long catalogue of our victories in North Carolina has been recently swelled by the capture of Fort Macon, and the triumph of General RENO at Camden. The enemy could not defend Fort Pulaski, nor efficiently guard the approaches to Savannah. They could not hold the forts they had stolen in Florida. They could not prevent our fleet from passing up the Mississippi, abreast of their great metropolis, and thus seizing New Orleans. They could not retain Columbus, Island No. 10, Northern Alabama, or Nashville. They were unable to reap any fruits from their temporary triumph in the first day's fight at Pittsburg Landing, as they were compelled to fall back upon Corinth, a place from which they will probably soon be driven.

They are as unsuccessful on sea as on land. Their boasted system of privateering has proved a dead failure. It is reported that their only really successful vessel, the *Sumpter*, is about to be sold, and that the officers and crew have returned to Southampton. One of the cruisers, which, for a time, was successful in eluding our blockade, the *Isabel*, or *Ella Warley*, was captured by the United States gunboat *Santiago de Cuba*, a few days ago, while it was attempting to run a cargo of arms, ammunition, wines, cigars, and medicines, from Nassau, N. P., to Charleston. The *Merrimac*, it is true, destroyed a few of our wooden vessels in Hampton Roads, but she dared not venture a second attack, and it is reported that her officers were so fully convinced of the folly and danger of attempting any important new enterprise that they resigned rather than obey their sealed orders to sail to the York river. They doubtless knew that such preparations had been made for the reception of their boasted monster as would probably insure its destruction.

Thus, the whole vaunting rebel programme has been utterly demolished. Boasting that they would seize the capital, invade the North, and plunder the cities of the free States, not one of their soldiers has ventured above Mason and Dixon's line, and at some point in every Commonwealth the authority of the Union has been restored. The old flag waves triumphantly over at least a portion of the soil of every member of the Confederacy, and it is only in detached parts of the eleven rebellious States that the rule of DAVIS is still acknowledged. The power and prestige of the conspiracy have departed forever. Its pride is humbled, its communications are broken, its hopes of prosperity have all vanished. None of the promises of its leaders have been realized. Its ability to "move on" is confined to retrograde movements. Its threats against the North and the commercial world are only realized in the ruin of Southern interests. Consternation almost universally prevails throughout all Secessia, and at no point are there greater signs of fear and trepidation than at Richmond. The rebel Congress is taunted by its own organs with having adjourned for the sole purpose of enabling its members to seek their personal safety in flight. The "contraband" coachman of the Secession chieftain reports that Confederate money is no longer willingly received at the capital where it is issued; that Mr. and Mrs. JEFF DAVIS have prepared for a new hegira to Montgomery, or some unknown region; that "Lady DAVIS" considers "the Confederacy about played out," and the attempt to hold the non-cotton-growing States a serious, if not a fatal error. The experiment of advancing to Virginia has been almost as ruinous to the conspiracy itself as to that devastated State. It now must certainly soon be abandoned, and the leading spirits of the rebellion may well ask in trembling tones where they shall go. North Carolina can afford no safe place for refuge. Its Governor is reported to have been arrested on account of his strong disposition to institute a counter revolution, and to restore his State, by virtue of the rights of sovereignty with which, according to the Secession philosophy, it is endowed, to its legitimate position in the American Union. Even if this rumor is untrue, and if the loyal feeling it indicates does not exist, it is plain enough that if Virginia is deserted by the rebels they cannot long sustain themselves in a quarter that would be so closely beleaguered by General BURNSIDE, and by the powerful armies of MCCLELLAN, MCDOWELL, and BANKS. Tennessee cannot be thought of now. The whole of the middle portion of the State is in our possession. The Eastern portion is loyal in feeling, and the day of its deliverance cannot be distant. South Carolina, with all its boasted chivalry, cannot shake off the Union garrisons that swarm along its coast and keep its metropolis in a constant fever of trepidation. In the interior of Georgia they might for a time be safe, but they could not long there find rest for their weary feet. There is a prospect that they will again occupy their old capital, at Montgomery, Alabama. But it is now surrounded, on nearly all sides, by Union troops, who could easily march against it. It will not be very surprising if a fate similar to that which befell the so-called rebel provisional government of Kentucky overtakes JEFF DAVIS and his Cabinet. It was driven by our victorious army of the West from point to point, until it had no other capital than a Sibley tent, in which its dignitaries of State aired their unsubstantial honors as best they could, until, at the battle of Shiloh, their Provisional Governor, GEORGE W. JOHNSON, fell, bitterly lamenting the utter prostration of the unholy cause in which he had sacrificed his life.

It is surprising that, amid so many disasters, the rebels should still protract a contest in which they cannot possibly be successful. If the leaders of the conspiracy had any regard for the welfare of the people of the South, peace would speedily be restored. But, unfortunately, the destinies of that section are, for the present, under the control of men of desperate fortunes, who, conscious of the extent of their criminality, will prolong the war to the last moment, in the hope that some sudden turn of fortune may extricate them from the awful dilemma in which they have placed themselves. If they were at the head of a recognized government, they would probably deem it their imperative duty to rescue the people they have deluded from the many sufferings they are now enduring and the many dangers which menace them. But the leading conspirators, while they have not the power to resist our armies, are enabled to wield an iron rod over the districts not yet rescued from their control, and to punish with remorseless cruelty all who are patriotic enough to disobey their imperious mandates.

That abandonment of their treasonable organization which would restore peace to the nation, and happiness to thousands of firesides, they dread as their individual ruin. Steeped to their eyelids in crime, they cannot now safely retreat, and they will seek, while they can, to protract a hopeless war, with all its attendant horrors and miseries, for their individual benefit, trusting that some loophole of escape may be opened.

For a brief period still the nation must struggle on, but as it has baffled all the original designs of the conspirators, and driven in all their outworks, the time cannot be far distant when all their remaining hopes will be destroyed, the authority of the Union fully re-established throughout the length and breadth of the land, and the chiefs of the rebellion be appropriately punished.

THE BRECKINRIDGE PAPERS are excessively delighted at the revelations of the celebrated Van Wyck Committee, and at the late scene in the House of Representatives of the United States, produced by the resolutions of that committee. And upon the revelations of this committee and the vote of censure in the House, they propose to arraign the whole Republican party, and to prepare for the coming elections on the encouraging theory that the Republicans are a set of persistent scoundrels, and that all the existing integrity has lodged among those Breckinridge politicians who have *not yet* taken up arms in company with FLOYD, JACOB THOMPSON, and BRECKINRIDGE himself. It would not be an ungraceful sequel to this exhibition, if these Breckinridge papers would show that among the most industrious petitioners for favors at the departments of the General Administration were prominent advocates of the present Breckinridge organization; nor would it do injustice to any honest history if the additional fact were stated, that while a number of these partisans received valuable contracts or jobs, they did not obtain them because they made corrupt propositions, but because the Government acted fairly by all, and needed the aid of all in its darkest hours of doubt and despair. Partisans in such a desperate strait, however, cannot stop to speak the truth. They have a mission to perform. The Breckinridge leaders in Pennsylvania are everywhere known to have supported the Heaven-defying corruptions of FLOYD, TOUCEY, and JACOB THOMPSON, under the Administration of the Great Criminal, JAMES BUCHANAN, and they are now universally believed to sympathize with the Great Rebellion, so steadily assisted by themselves; and therefore it is a necessity—it is a life-and-death matter that they should raise a cry of corruption against the Republicans; and the Van Wyck Report has given them the opportunity.

NOTHING THAT has been done by the Administration or by Congress can be cited to show that the Republican party is in favor of emancipating the slaves of the South. The act abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia was demanded by the highest military and national necessity, was voted for by Democrats and Border-State men, and stands justified by the highest constitutional authorities. If there is further emancipation, it results from the cruelties and insanities of the rebels themselves; and had Judge DOUGLAS been chosen President the revolt against his Administration would have been as bitter as that against Mr. LINCOLN's, and the liberation of slaves as general as since the commencement of our present struggle. There is not a Convention of the Republican party that has demanded emancipation at the hands of Congress; and if the supporters of emancipation in the National Legislature could be assembled they would prove as a party what the Chief Magistrate is daily proving, that they do not regard emancipation as one of the objects of the war.

THE BEST WAY to answer a Breckinridger, when he insists that the property of the rebels shall not be confiscated, is to ask him what the Southern slaveholders would have done had positions been reversed, they being as strong as the present loyal States, and the latter commencing the war? Would they have hesitated to confiscate every description of property? Would they have refrained from filling their prisons with suspected persons, from hanging spies, and from dealing devastation on all sides? The answer to these inquiries is found in the fact that having begun the war without cause, they have stolen and destroyed hundreds of millions of the property of the Federal Government, have repudiated hundreds of millions of just debts, and have sacrificed and confiscated hundreds of millions of the property of their own people.

THE BRECKINRIDGE LEADERS, having brought the Government to the verge of ruin and involved the country in a terrible war, despite the peaceful tendencies of the times in which they bore rule, now propose to take the reins of power from the hands of the unquestionably loyal, and sail the ship on their own account.

PARSON BROWNLOW.—On May-day this patriotic and popular gentleman sat for his portrait to Mr. Gutekunst, the photographer, Arch street, and the result was a splendid *carte de visite*, which McAllister & Brother, 728 Chestnut street, published on Monday, and have already sold very largely.

LETTER FROM "OCCASIONAL."

WASHINGTON, May 5.

General McClellan has undoubtedly shown great strategic ability in compelling the rebels to abandon a position which he deemed almost impregnable. His despatch announcing their evacuation of a stronghold so elaborately fortified is generally accepted as the augury of another and a conclusive victory. Nothing seems to be necessary to complete the panic and the demoralization of the enemy, but *pursuit by land and water*. This has been ordered, and probably before my letter is in type you may receive the evidence of its success. A correspondent in the Baltimore *Sun*, of this morning, describes the configuration of the region between Yorktown and Richmond as follows:

An examination of the great military map of Virginia, published by order of the State, shows that the peninsula widens a little beyond Yorktown, and there is no stream above the rank of creek until the "Chickahominy" river is reached. Two roads extend from Yorktown to near Williamsburg, which place is described by persons here who know the country thoroughly, as on a dead level. Two roads run from Williamsburg to Richmond. One crosses the "Chickahominy" river near its confluence with the James river, and skirts the north bank of the latter and crosses numerous creeks. The other road, or the northern route to Richmond, runs parallel with York river to New Kent C. H., and thence two roads to Richmond, one straight west, crossing the Chickahominy at a point between swamps. The other road runs more northerly, and is not cut by swamps or large streams. It is supposed that General McClellan's gunboats and transports can go up the York river, and thus more readily furnish supplies to his army.

The first cause of this sudden panic of the rebels was undoubtedly the overwhelming preparations of McClellan for the siege, which was to commence to-day, and the admirable diversion upon Fredericksburg of McDowell, Augur, Banks, Shields, Geary, and Fremont. The last strategy has been bitterly complained of in certain quarters, but it has splendidly vindicated itself. With the map of Virginia before you, you can, almost at a glance, realize how successfully the enemy may be fought and followed. Every arrangement has been made to cross the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg, if that should be deemed necessary, so that no attempt can be made by the rebels upon the column which rests on that river. Indeed, in the universal fear that by this time has overtaken the whole populace of Richmond and its surroundings, I would not be surprised if our forces made an advance from Fredericksburg and took the capital of the so-called Confederacy on the other flank. At this writing great and general praise is awarded to McClellan, and if his pursuit is persevered in, as I have no doubt it will be, the measure of his renown will be filled to overflowing. Simultaneous with this great news comes the intelligence of the *evacuation of Corinth*. In this quarter, as in Virginia, the panic of the rebels must be fearful. Behind and around them the great army of Halleck, which is now, or soon will be, in Memphis, and which, this done, may advance to the rebel front by means of the river, they see before them the gunboats of Foote and Porter, and behold the great capital of the Southwest, New Orleans, in the possession of the Union troops, where can they look for succor or escape? Their only alternative is in a prompt and graceful submission to the authority of the Government.

When the State Department makes public the reasons which have actuated the President in directing the arrest and confinement of certain suspected persons, the partisans who have been so highly offended, and have sought revenge and recompense in our courts, will hang their heads in shame. They have demanded to know why they and their friends have been imprisoned, and their demand will be answered in such a way as will satisfy all loyal men that the course of the Administration was eminently sagacious and just. OCCASIONAL.

ALL HONOR to President LINCOLN and his constitutional advisers! They have done their whole duty to the American people. Now, while we are rejoicing over the triumphs of the army and navy, let us not forget the enormous and unprecedented responsibilities and labors of the officers who have had to bear the burdens devolved upon the several departments of the Government. When they came into power, they found a vast ruin left them to restore, to rebuild, and to reanimate, and within a year they have not only done this great work, but have put a vast army into the field, created a mighty navy, and astonished the civilized world by their wisdom, their forbearance, their vigor, and their patriotism.

WHY SHOULD there not be a striking correspondence in the actions and impulses, as there is in the objects, of the rebels and the Breckinridgers? The latter openly co-operated with the Southern madmen up to the fall of Sumpter. Their objects and sympathies are still akin. Through their infernal machinations there is weeping in almost every loyal household, and the shadow of still greater grief falls across every loyal threshold. Are such men to be trusted again? Are these fit counsellors of the people in these fearful times? Loyal Republicans and loyal Democrats, you are to answer these questions at the polls next October.

The Pennsylvanians at the Battle of Shiloh.

The only Pennsylvania regiment engaged in the battle of Shiloh was the Seventy-seventh, commanded by Colonel Stambaugh. They were attached to General McCook's division, and that officer in his official report tells what part they took in that great battle. General McCook says:

Being satisfied that the enemy had changed his point of attack from the right to my extreme left, I ordered Colonel Stambaugh's Seventy-seventh Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers to take up a position on my extreme left, and repel the assault there being made; he immediately engaged them, and at this moment the contest along the whole line became terrible. Colonel Kirk's brigade now was ordered to engage, and he arrived precisely at the right moment, as the cartridges of General Rousseau's brigade were all expended. General Rousseau's brigade fell back through Colonel Kirk's lines, and retired to the woods in the rear, to be supplied with ammunition. Three hours before, being convinced from the stubbornness with which the enemy was contending, and the rapid discharges of my regiments, that their forty rounds would soon be exhausted, I despatched Lieutenant Campbell, my ordnance officer, for teams to bring up ammunition. He arrived at the opportune moment with three wagon loads. * * * *

Colonel Stambaugh, with the Seventy-seventh Pennsylvania regiment of volunteers, early in the action, being ordered to watch the enemy upon my left, was at a later period ordered to engage. His regiment, partially isolated from the rest of the division, steadily moved over an open field in its front under a heavy fire. *While here the enemy's cavalry charged this regiment twice, but was each time repulsed with heavy loss.* Col. Stambaugh had the satisfaction of receiving the sword of Col. Batteles, of the Twentieth Tennessee, who surrendered to him as a prisoner. Lieut. Col. Housem and Major Stambaugh ably seconded the efforts of Col. Stambaugh.

PROFESSOR COPPEE.—The following appears in the New York *Herald* of yesterday, and we take leave to add, from personal conviction and knowledge, that a more loyal man than the accomplished writer does not live:

To the Editor of the Herald:

1826 PINE STREET, PHILADELPHIA, May 3, 1862.

Knowing that you would not be designedly unjust, I call your attention to an error in the statement of your letter writer from the vicinity of Yorktown. It is in your paper of Friday. In giving a sketch of the life of my West Point classmate, General Fitz John Porter, he mentions several of the class who now occupy distinguished positions in our army, and then among those who are in the rebel ranks he includes my name. I desire you to favor me by announcing that neither in thought, word, nor deed am I a rebel, but a loyal citizen of the best Government in the world. I was brought up under the stars and stripes, and mean to adhere to them as long as I live; and I intend to reside, if nothing unforeseen should occur, where I have resided for seven years past, in Philadelphia, where loyalty is the rule and rebels are not countenanced. I will only add that your letter writer probably consulted a "register of officers and graduates," and finding that I was from Georgia, and had resigned—albeit so far back as 1855—took it for granted that I was in the ranks of rebellion, a decided *non sequitur*, in one case, at least. Your paper is widely circulated. Those in distant places who have lost sight of me would be misled by the statement referred to. I have, therefore, respectfully to request that you will publish this note, and oblige, yours, respectfully,

HENRY COPPEE,
Professor University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

AMERICANS AT LEGHORN.—In a Leghorn paper (the *Indicatre Commerciale del Porto-Franeo di Livorno*, of April 14,) we find the following list of Americans registered at the United States Consulate at Leghorn, for the week ending Saturday, 12th of April, 1862:

Andrew J. Stevens, consul; Mr. William Hoffman, of New York; Mr. Charles C. Thompson, of New York; Mrs. C. M. Thompson, of New York; Mr. R. J. Monks, of Boston; Mrs. R. J. Monks, of Boston; Mr. Henry M. Brooks, of New York; Mrs. Emily A. Brooks, of New York; Mr. De Wolfe Seuett, Hallowell, Maine; Miss Seuett, Hallowell, Maine.

LARGE POSITIVE SALE OF BOOTS AND SHOES, TRAVELLING-BAGS, STRAW GOODS, &c.—The early attention of purchasers is requested to the large assortment of boots, shoes, brogans, travelling-bags, and straw goods, viz: Panama, straw, and palm hats, Shaker hoods, women's and misses' Leghorn and fancy straw hats, bloomers, &c., embracing first-class seasonable goods, of city and Eastern manufacture, to be peremptorily sold, by catalogue, on four months' credit, commencing with the straw goods, this morning, at 10 o'clock, by John B. Myers & Co., auctioneers, Nos. 232 and 234 Market street.

SALE THIS DAY—STOCKS AND REAL ESTATE.—Thomas & Sons' large sale, at the Exchange, will commence *precisely at twelve o'clock*. See catalogues and advertisements.

THE EVACUATION OF YORKTOWN.

[Correspondence of The Press.]

BEFORE YORKTOWN, May 3, 1862.

I would like to give you an idea, if such a thing were possible, of how we are placed on this peninsula. A fortnight of life here has been more particularly warlike than any we have yet enjoyed since the commencement of the war. It has experiences long to be treasured—full of meaning, strange and varied. Here we are in a new country to all intents and purposes—a sleepy, quiet, and not very inviting place in time of peace, half cultivated, raw and unfinished. From the tent where I am writing I have a very pleasant and characteristic view. It is soft and genial, with a cloud or two passing over the sky, and the smoke from a kitchen fire insinuating itself among the pine and cedar branches of the arbor above me. There is an open space in front which might have been a meadow land, but the grass has been trodden and worn away. There are deep ruts still remaining, left by a train of quartermasters' wagons who passed along a few days since when we had the heavy shower of rain. A regiment is lying out beyond, in a low nestling encampment of shelter tents and huts of clay, extemporized by the ingenious soldiers of the line. Four soldiers are pitching quoits, and seem to be interested in the game, for they have been busily engaged since long before breakfast—and a little farther off a corporal is leisurely drilling a couple of stupid privates, who go through the motions awkwardly. If we pass up to the end of the encampment we cross a ravine, and enter what was a field, but what is the parade ground of some artillery companies. In the distance is a farm-house, very much abused, from which a small red flag is flying to denote that it is a hospital. Beyond this house is a long range of woods, thickly filled with soldiers, and constituting the advance of our right wing. Here we occasionally see Lowe's balloon mysteriously sailing up from the trees to its stationary thousand feet. There is constant firing, too, sometimes musketry and sometimes artillery, although I have not heard a report for the last half hour.

This is the right of the division. Immediately behind us, at the distance of a furlong from the tent where I am staying, are the headquarters of the army. It would be impossible to imagine a prettier encampment than that occupied by General McClellan. It is on the border of a wood, and very near a running steam, to which we are indebted for our fresh water. A rising lawn has been chosen sloping up towards the forest. It has been ditched and graded, and the tents arranged with care. Most of the tents are plain wall tents, with arbors of green in front. The General's is in the centre, and near to it is the flag-staff from which our colors are floating. The French princes, and the other members of his staff, are quartered around him, and with the quarters for servants and horses, orderlies and attendants, the encampment of the General is as large as most of those occupied by a regiment. A guard of Zouaves surround the lines and keep off curious people, whom I find to be as plenty here as in more civilized and peaceful communities. We occasionally see our little commander. He is very modest and unpretending, and has a way of moving about at the most unexpected times and in the most unusual places. An evening or two since, just before "retreat," I was passing within the camp lines of a neighboring regiment. There was a little bustle in a group of soldiers near the quartermaster's tent, and I turned around. The men stood to "attention" and gave a salute, while a single horseman rode rapidly along attended by an orderly. A fatigue cap was on his head, and he wore a blue blouse without any marks of rank. I recognized the well-known features of General McClellan and watched him as he passed on. The members of his staff started after him as soon as they learned of his departure, and it was amusing to witness the eager haste they manifested to reach the General. The young Duke de Chartres, a splendid rider, Colonel Astor, and Major Russell, of the marine corps, were among those I noticed in this hasty pursuit.

This is in the neighborhood of Wormley's creek, a narrow, sluggish stream, very popular in our camps on account of the good quality of the oysters and game with which it abounds. I saw a soldier yesterday coming up the bank with a pair of ducks he had caught, and a negro behind him carrying a basket of oysters. He wanted them for "the lieutenant," he said, and was evidently pleased with his great success. Beyond the creek, there is a broad corn-field, which extends along to the river, and retains some portion of the old fence-work; it branches out to a point formed by the confluence of the creek and York river, and is now being planted with siege guns and cannon of heavy calibre. Here is the Battery Number One, from which the batteries at Gloucester Point were shelled. A large house stands near the river, with garden palings around it, and earthworks built upon ruined fruit-trees. The house is deserted—nothing remains but a bedstead and a few articles of furniture.

From this house we can see the rebel works at Yorktown very distinctly. The tall flag-pole, with the rebel flag flying, could be seen with the naked eye; with a plain field-glass the colors of the flag were easily distinguished. A low line of water batteries stretched along the shore, and occasionally a form would be seen moving past the embrasures. We were so near that the sounds of rebel music could be heard, and on the occasion of my first visit I distinctly heard their drums and fifes. There could be no mistaking the sounds, for in the camps of our army no music is allowed, and at all the military duties of the day—reveille, mount guard, retreat, and tattoo—the fife and drum are dispensed with. This is done as a precautionary measure, to prevent the enemy from knowing our numbers and exact location. Out in the stream our gunboats are crawling about, occasionally creeping up to the point, firing a shell and floating back to their anchorage.

The last day or two has been very quiet. Some regard it as the calm before the storm—others think that the enemy is preparing a surprise, and that, before we are aware of their intentions, they will turn a flank and fall on the rear. Then there is the strange, but far more probable rumor, that Magruder is about to evacuate, and that there will be no fight on the peninsula at all. This is the impression that is deepening. I am confident, however, that if a battle does not take place, it will not be because it is not anticipated. I heard a general of high station say a few days ago that on this peninsula would be fought one of the greatest battles of the age—that it would be bloody and decisive, and would end this war. I have talked with officers, too, who had a more serious idea of affairs here. They seemed to think that within the parallels of Magruder lay the whole strength of the Southern Confederacy, and that it would be a great victory to drive the rebels out of their works and force them to meet us in an open country. This is the reason given for our refusal thus far to shell the enemy and storm their entrenchments. That would cost life, and could be followed by no immediate result. It is thought that McClellan desires to perfect his arrangements here in the front, to send up and occupy Gloucester Point, and either take the enemy in the rear or compel him to abandon his position. General Franklin's division has been lying off Ship Point for three weeks, ready for some such service as this. It has been living on steamboats and transports in a most uncomfortable manner, within five minutes' sail of shore, so that it may move to any point at a moment's warning, and this circumstance, known to all here, and I think known throughout the North, convinces us that McClellan has a plan deeper and more intricate than any now apparent.

BEYOND YORKTOWN, May 4.

I concluded the above paragraph yesterday, and laid it aside to await the mail of this morning. But morning comes with greater news than any I have yet recorded, and I resume this unfinished sheet for the purpose of giving you the story. *The rebel army has evacuated Yorktown—our forces are in possession—the cavalry, artillery, and regular infantry are in hot pursuit.* This comes as a curious climax to our dreams last night, and will, I am afraid, sound strangely in connection with the flippant sentences and crude theories I spent yesterday in writing.

It was not yet daybreak when the adjutant came into our tent, with the announcement that immediate marching orders had been received, and that we were to move at once on Yorktown. Of course there was haste, bustle, and confusion—hurried and incomplete toilets, buckling on swords, slinging haversacks, and every possible preparation for the march. The men were falling rapidly into line, orderlies were galloping hither and thither, staff-officers, and aids, and field-officers were tumultuous and excitable. It was a strange contrast to the scene of the evening before, when we all sat at the tent-doors smoking our brier-wood pipes, watching the smoke curling around the new-born crescent, sentimentalizing about home, or speculating about the morrow and what it might bring forth.

The cavalry have gone ahead, and there go the artillery. Lumbering, screaming, thundering, the guns and caissons pass along, the captains shouting, and the horses impatient and fierce. They slacken their pace before going very far, for very soon the words are passed, and they pass into the edge of last night's picket lines. We cannot be rash in these strange districts. Ambuscades and infernal machines and unimaginable contrivances are to be dreaded. So they pass along cautiously, steadily, surely. The outer parallel of the Union works is passed. They are now in the disputed ground, over which the swift rifle balls have been constantly going and coming within the last few weeks. In a short time the rebel works are reached. It is wonderful how close we have been to the enemy. It seemed to me but a minute or two in riding over a field and through a thicket separating the extreme lines of both armies. A little negro hut stood at the side of the grove, but its inhabitants had gone, and it bore evidences of having been used as a shelter for the rebel pickets during their occupation of the village, one name—"P. F. Tricou, N. C. Vols."—being cut, in at least three places, by some ambitious rebel who was fortunate enough to possess a sharp penknife. Before daybreak our soldiers were in Yorktown, and the sky was scarcely clear before the correspondents were behind them, prowling around huts, camps, and the ramparts, with ravenous pens and small slips of paper, very much after the fashion of Mr. Dickens' newspaper men in "Bleak House," who reported the wonderful case of spontaneous combustion.

How shall I tell what the gentlemen of tissue paper and ravenous little pens felt and thought and saw, as, passing the outer line of ramparts that in the morning mists had loomed up so grimly and defiant, but now looked harmless and deserted, they entered the boasted stronghold? How strange to think that these were the dikes and embrasures that by day and by night, for weeks past, had worn an air of so much mystery, and were the objects of so much fearful interest and strange solicitude and lucid speculation? But this is not the time for such reflections. We can see, as we pause on an elevation here, the lines of infantry jogging forward briskly; some stragglers with heavy haversacks, who rub their eyes indignantly at the reveille and seem to be scarcely awake, even now, are bringing up the rear. Some few of them are singing "Dixie;" many of them are boisterous, and every one is talking to his neighbor. The sun is coming up from the broad waters, and the long line of winding bayonets is gleaming and flashing in the crisp air, that seems musical with the hum of voices, and the ring of sabres, and the tramp of many feet. Right ahead of us, the rebel standard floats defiantly in the light breeze that is blowing from the river. The men look on it eagerly, with hatred stamped upon their faces, and some of them gaze forward with distrust. The column halts for a single moment. A shout, dull and far away, is borne with reverberation to our ears. The flag is hauled down! The men are dashing forward and cheering most tremendously. The dull roar that sounded like the plaintive beat of a surging sea, has become a sublime and mighty chorus, like the boom of the rolling breakers near a headland.

We are fairly within the rebel works. We have passed their entrenchments and bastions in safety, with tumultuous joy and shouts of triumph. The rebel flag is nowhere to be seen. Everything is in the most profound and hopelessly inextricable confusion. Camp equipage is strewn around, and looks forlorn, dejected, miserable. No curl of smoke goes up from any tent to speak of hospitality and plenty. The ground is trodden and cut with broad wagon-tracks, and littered with the tokens of the foe's discomfiture and haste. Here is a drum that, to make it as inefficient as possible, has been punctured with gaping holes all over its head. There are some picks and shovels, to which the sacred soil still clings in clods. To our right are vast piles of shot and shell. To our rear the second line of defences stretches outward to the coast, like a chain of distant hills. These batteries, at the commencement of the siege, were said to have mounted one hundred and twenty guns, of formidable calibre. There are not half, probably not quarter, that number visible now. They are few and far between, and it is said that *all of them are spiked*. Here, again, we come to a *caisson*, that seems to have been struck by one of our shells, for it is shattered almost to pieces. The gun has been unlimbered and removed. Whichever way we turn, we encounter relics of the departed enemy. They are such as are common to every military camp, except that they seem to have been disarranged, for some unaccountable reason, in the night. Nothing has been burned, apparently, and nothing left that could be conveniently removed. The flight seems to have been much hurried, but not accompanied with a panic. It was precipitate, and yet I might almost say deliberate.

We are startled by the explosion of a shell, and very soon the word is passed from mouth to mouth, that several of our generals and an unaccountable number of privates have been killed. Not without a feeling of excitement, and, perhaps, not wholly without a slight tremor of trepidation, I hasten to trace the statement to its source. Much to my relief, I find it greatly exaggerated, although the truth is sad enough. Two of our men have been killed and several slightly wounded by the explosion of a percussion shell, which had been partially buried, so I learn, near the base of the rebel flag-staff. It is a very fearful thing that death should visit such a scene of triumph, and sadden moments of the wildest joy. As the wounded are borne away to the hospital, where the red flag is slowly waving in the sunlight, a silence falls upon the witnesses. It is but a moment—but in the calm and tranquil beauty of the Sabbath it comes to many a rugged soldier in the throng, with gentler thoughts, and memories of years.

But now the quiet is disturbed in an unexpected quarter. We can hear the steady booming of guns for some miles up the river. What does it mean? We ask. Every eager face asks the same question anxiously, and many speculations are indulged in. At length I hear that our gunboats have gone up the river this morning, and probably are shelling small rebel batteries along the coast. The contraband, who has just appeared upon the scene, with a grateful sense of his own importance, can give his myriad of questioners but little information on this point, although in everything else he appears to be *au fait*. He twists an odd-looking skull-cap in his fingers nervously, and by dint of rolling his eyes, is growing very voluble. He might have a thousand tongues, however, and fail to answer half the questions that are propounded to him in chorus. Where are they gone? When did they go? What did they go for? How many of them were there? What did they say, and think, and expect? Each of these interrogatories was propounded a dozen times at least in my hearing, and appeared to afford unspeakable gratification to the Ethiopian, who at intervals would swing himself about and indulge in a burst of hearty laughter, throwing his arms above his head to prevent asphyxia.

While scenes such as these were transpiring in and about the town, in such countless varieties that an instantaneous photograph could not have done *full* justice to them all, our cavalry and artillery were dashing down the road to Williamsburg. The enemy could not have left many hours before, and the possibility of overtaking them was not unpromising. It was well on to noon before the long line of the pursuers was out of sight—swallowed up in the dust, the glare, and the horizon; and many of us fancied we could hear the thunder of their forward march an hour after.

I can elaborate no more. It is necessary that these hurried lines, pencilled on a convenient bank, where I can rest my portfolio, should be sent off to catch the steamboat on its way to Fortress Monroe. Long before this column is read the story of the retreat will have been told by the anticipating telegraph. It has been my aim simply to tell you some of the incidents that crowd upon me in this dramatic and bustling hour. We are moving on rapidly, and while this goes to Philadelphia, I go on my way to Richmond. The soldiers are passing on, regiment after regiment, and our flag flying above them. There is a shout from a crowd beyond the field, and a company of horsemen galloping through the rising dust. "There goes McClellan," says a sergeant, who has stopped to strap a comrade's knapsack. "Three cheers for him. Now, boys, we're off to Richmond." R. T. S.

LETTER FROM FORTRESS MONROE.

Evacuation of Yorktown—Heavy Firing—The Captured Guns—Flag of Truce—Dead Body Washed Ashore—The Merrimac: Her Appearance Changed—Trial of a New Projectile—From New Orleans—Astounding News.

[Special Correspondence of The Press.]

FORTRESS MONROE, Sunday, May 4.

Just as I sat down to write my letter, this morning, there came the astounding news that Yorktown had been evacuated by the enemy.

The news came in the shape of a despatch from Gen. McClellan to Gen. Wool. It says that the evacuation was consummated some time during the night. The despatch is dated at three o'clock this morning. Rumors of a speedy evacuation have been rife for some days, but no faith was placed in them, and your correspondent did not think them of sufficient importance to chronicle in the columns of *The Press*.

During the whole of last night the firing of heavy guns was terrific, and many thought that the bombardment had commenced in earnest, and no people were more surprised than were the residents here to know that General McClellan was in Yorktown, and that the enemy had evacuated.

This occupation of Yorktown places us in possession of nearly four hundred siege guns, many of them rifled, and nearly all in good condition except that they are spiked, but these spikes can be easily drawn and the guns rendered serviceable again.

A flag of truce was sent out yesterday. No Southern papers were received except two or three copies of the Norfolk *Day Book*, and this only contains a few doleful lamentations on the ill success of the Confederate army.

The body of an officer in the Delaware regiment, but whose name I could not ascertain, was washed ashore at Mill Creek bridge yesterday afternoon. It is supposed that he has been foully dealt with, as all his front teeth are knocked in, and there is a severe bruise as though made with a heavy blow over the temple.

The *Merrimac* was out to-day cruising around in the direction of Craney Island, but not daring to come within range of the guns of the Fortress, or of those of the *Galena* and *Monitor*. Crowds of people are watching her movements from the docks, but there is no probability that she will venture down to-day. The bay is in fine condition for her to come out, the water being smooth and there being no wind.

She presents quite a changed appearance, and many failed to recognize her. She is of a light lead color, very low in the water, with a long prow, and her deck is crowded with men.

Now that Gen. Wool, and the Associated Press agent, send almost daily despatches to the Northern press, the letters of the correspondents here are somewhat old by the time they get to the newspaper offices. No "specials" are allowed to be sent over the Government line of telegraph.

An impromptu trial of a new projectile was held a few days since from one of our batteries. A party of rebels undertook to burn a bridge, the safety of which was necessary to the operations of the siege. A few ordinary shell were sent at them without much effect, when one of a new kind of incendiary shell, lately patented, was fired at them. It burst in the woods just beyond, setting them on fire in an instant, while the rebels ran like frightened sheep. They did not expect such a missile.

I hear from New Orleans, that out of the enemy's fleet of six gunboats at that place, we have sunk two and taken four.

A contraband is reported to have brought in a rumor that Richmond is in possession of General McDowell. It is hardly possible, but at last accounts (two weeks since) he was at Fredericksburg, only sixty miles from Richmond; and as that city was comparatively defenceless, he may have taken it. We will soon know.

THE WEATHER.

The sky is cloudy, and there is a prospect of rain. There is scarcely a breath of wind, and the bay is smooth. A heavy storm is looked for before many days.

MATOU.

FROM WASHINGTON.

The Pacific Railroad Bill to Pass.

Visit of the French Minister and Others to Yorktown.

THEY WITNESS ITS OCCUPATION.

The Ammunition and Stores Destroyed by the Rebels.

Assumption of the Interest on the Public Debt.

PROVISIONS OF THE BILL.

Proposed Donation of Lands for Agricultural Colleges.

ANOTHER CONFISCATION BILL OFFERED.

Special Despatches to "The Press."

WASHINGTON, May 5, 1862.

Visit of the French Minister and other prominent Gentlemen to Yorktown—What they saw.

I learn that the French Minister, Mr. MERCIER, in company with Messrs. FRANK P. BLAIR, SR., FRANK BLAIR JR., ex-governor of Ohio, and a number of other gentlemen holding distinguished positions in the Government, left here on Friday last for Fortress Monroe, determined to get a glimpse of Yorktown, and if fortunate enough, to be "in at the death" of its rebel defenders.

After a very pleasant trip, in which none but the most propitious weather was enjoyed, and nought but the best spirits prevailed, the excursion party reached Old Point. After a brief sojourn here, and still briefer observation of the points of interest, the advance upon Yorktown was begun. The famous old peninsula was reached in safety by the voyageurs, directly after the evacuation had taken place.

They had just arrived in time to witness that memorable Sunday scene, the waking of our legions to the startling fact, the reveille, the hurrying in and out of eager men, the mounting of the impatient cavalry, the forward move, the occupation of the deserted town, that lay as dim and peaceful in the distance as some village churchyard, and the tearing down of the rebel flag that flaunted with a sacrilegious wave in the Sabbath sunlight. All this was witnessed by the party, and much more, that, if less romantic, is none the less enjoyable, and worth recording.

The gentlemen having returned from their reconnoissance to-day, your correspondent sought, and obtained, of them not only an interview, but many facts of interest.

They report, that with the exception of two negroes, who appeared to be generally satisfied with the invasion, the town was wholly deserted by the rebels, who, prior to their French leave, managed to produce a "confusion worse confounded" state of affairs—at which sort of work they are unusually felicitous.

The fortifications, they state, are of the most powerful description, and most elaborately constructed. They might have been defended stubbornly by less than one-fourth of the army which deserted them as untenable; and in every respect they show evidence of high engineering skill, no less than a blind confidence of success.

The proofs of sudden flight are plainly visible on every hand—in the litter of camp equipage; in the abandonment of vast stores of ammunition, which article is daily becoming scarce with the enemy, and in the general *dishabille* (if I may so speak of a camp) and wild disorder which met the eye at every turn.

It was ascertained that an immense amount of powder had been thrown into the river, together with implements of peace as well as of war. Axes, picks, and shovels, whose labor had vainly expended itself on profitless fortifications, were pitched overboard in the rancor of revenge and bitter disappointment. Pikes and well-made sabres shared the same fate by thousands. All of these arms will doubtless be recovered.

The passage of our army through Yorktown was a grand spectacle, worthy the easel of the best historical painter on the continent. No canvas can ever reproduce its strange impressiveness and spirit. The passage of the army occupied many hours.

General MCCLELLAN is active, confident, and vigilant as ever, and performs more drudgery than the meanest private in the ranks. He shares alike the labors and the confidence of his army, and with it will share the honor of the victory.

Assumption of Interest on the Public Debt.

The House passed a bill to-day, providing for increased revenues from imports to pay the interest on the public debt. This bill allows such portion of the tax as may be assessed by any State or Territory, or the District of Columbia, to be paid or satisfied, in whole or in part, by the release of such State, Territory, or District, duly executed to the United States, of any liquidated or determined claim pertaining thereof of equal amount against the United States; provided that in case of such release such State, Territory, or District shall be allowed the same abatement of the amount of such tax as would be allowed in case of the payment of the same in money, which shall be construed as applying to such claims of States for the reimbursement of expenses incurred by them in enrolling, subsisting, clothing, supplying, arming, equipping, paying, and transporting its troops employed in aiding to suppress the present insurrection against the United States, as shall be plead with the proper officers of the United States before the 30th of July next, and in such cases the abatement of fifteen per cent. shall be made on such portion of said tax as may be paid by the allowance of such claims in whole or in part, the same as if the final settlement and liquidation thereof had been made before the 30th of June.

The Case of the Ella Warley and Santiago de Cuba.

To prevent any chance of international trouble concerning the seizure of the *Ella Warley* at a point some hundreds of miles from our coast, her case will be adjudicated in Admiralty Court, in manner and form as suggested to be proper in such cases by the Law Officers of the British Crown.

The seamen of the *Santiago de Cuba* will probably get a thousand dollars each for their share of prize money. Heretofore, upwards of half that sum has been allotted to seamen. It is estimated that Commodore MCKEON, of the Gulf squadron, and Commodore ALDEN will get a hundred thousand dollars each as prize money. The Government's share (one half) of the proceeds of sales of prizes will pay for all the vessels that have been purchased on naval account.

In Relation to an Exchange of Prisoners.

Senator WILSON introduced the following to-day:

"*Resolved*, That humanity and sound policy require that the officers and men of the army and navy of the United States held as prisoners by the forces now in arms against the authority of the Government should be released from captivity, by such exchanges as may be needful; and that such exchanges, made as a measure of humanity and military expediency, would recognize solely the admitted facts that those forces in arms against the authority of the United States hold in captivity persons whom it is desirable to release from captivity by necessary practical measures."

Appointment of Postmasters in Pennsylvania.

JAMES C. SLOAN, postmaster McLaughlin's Store, Westmoreland county, Pennsylvania, vice SAMUEL MCLAUGHLIN, resigned.

ALMON HEATH, postmaster at Troy Centre, Crawford county, Pennsylvania, vice JOHN G. STRATTON, deceased.

MARYLAND.

At Wakefield, Carroll county, Maryland, ELIAS WOODS is appointed postmaster, vice ABRAHAM CASSELL, deceased.

New Post Office Established.

Foster's Mills, Armstrong county, Pennsylvania, and JAMES T. FOSTER appointed postmaster; between the offices of Adams and Coylesville, about one mile off route. The office is to be supplied without cost to the Department.

The Tax Bill.

It was generally believed that the tax bill would be reported to-day, but the Committee on Finance devoted today (and will occupy to-morrow) in the final consideration of the bill, thus leaving it to be reported on Wednesday. It will, doubtless, be before the Senate for some time.

Passes for the Southern Ports.

Assurances have been given that in a short time the prohibition relative to persons visiting the Southern ports will be removed. This will, doubtless, be met from the Treasury Department by a removal of all restriction on trade to such ports.

Death of D. B. Lathrop, United States Army Telegrapher.

D. B. LATHROP, operator on the United States Military Telegraph, died last night from injuries by the explosion of a torpedo, placed by the rebels in the deserted telegraph office at Yorktown. Mr. LATHROP was a resident of Springfield, Ohio, and highly esteemed by his brother telegraphers, and all who knew him. He was always among the first to volunteer to fill the post of danger, and his services in the front ranks will be painfully missed.

Brigadier General Confirmed.

The Senate this afternoon confirmed the nomination of J. NAPOLEON ZEBRMAN as brigadier general of volunteers. He was formerly on General FREMONT's staff, and will now be attached to HUNTER's command. He is by birth an Italian. His history is romantic and eventful, having been in many of the principal battles of Europe for the last fifty years, and is a banished citizen of Austria. Though seventy years of age, he appears to be not more than fifty, and is justly regarded as an efficient officer.

Bill to Secure Personal Liberty.

Senator CARLILE introduced a bill to-day to secure to the citizens of the United States personal liberty. This bill prescribes that arrests for disloyalty may only be made upon the oath of some person of known loyalty, with a particular description of the act of disloyalty or other cause for which such person has been arrested. The second section imposes a fine of ten thousand dollars upon any one who shall contravene the provisions of the first section, or an imprisonment in the penitentiary for a period not less than five years. Such arrested persons may have the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus*, which cannot be suspended. This act shall not prevent the arrest of persons in the disloyal States, if made as here prescribed.

The Tax on Whisky.

It is stated, in a reliable quarter, that the Senate Committee on Finance are equally divided upon the question of taxing whisky in hand. As the values are widely different, an *ad valorem* tax would be the proper one, which sort of assessment would "cost as much as it would come to."

Pacific Railroad.

Mr. CAMPBELL, of Pennsylvania, chairman of the select committee on the Pacific Railroad, pressed the bill nearly to a vote to-day, the amendments to the substitute being agreed to, and the latter adopted. The bill is to be printed, when the previous question will be ordered, and the bill passed, there being a clear majority in favor of it.

The Long Bridge Repaired.

Army transportation across the Long Bridge will be immediately resumed, the repairs to the broken draw being nearly completed. The Government loses heavily for not having a suitable military bridge at this point.

Gen. Smith and his Letter to Representative Morrill.

Opposition is developing itself in the Senate to the confirmation of Gen. SMITH, on account of his severe letter to Representative MORRILL, of Vermont.

Treasury Notes Exchanged for Gold.

I learn that the Government has recently exchanged a million of 7 3-10 treasury notes for a million in gold.

Confiscation—New Bill.

The Senate had under consideration to-day the confiscation bill, Mr. HOWE addressing the Senate and taking ground against it. In the House, Mr. THOMAS, of Massachusetts, introduced another bill in accordance with the views of his late speech, which was referred to the special committee on the subject. It will be some time before the subject is again before the House. Mr. T.'s bill imposes a heavier penalty on persons convicted of treason in the way of large fines, imprisonment, etc., thus practically confiscating portions, if not all, of their property.

The Rebel Loss of Guns.

When Island No. 10 was taken, the rebel papers complained of the loss of needed guns. The evacuation from Yorktown must badly heighten their troubles on that head.

Route Agency.

On the line from New York city to Piermont, N. J., M. M. HOUGHTON is appointed route agent, in place of JACOB SARVENT.

Mail Messengers Appointed.

At Camden, Delaware, EDWARD DOLBY is appointed mail messenger, vice JAMES KNIGHT, resigned.

At West Fairfield, Pennsylvania, JAMES A. AMBROSE is appointed for six times a week service, in place of A. HUSTON.

THE PURSUIT.

Despatches from Gen. McClellan.

OUR FORCES COME UP WITH THE REAR GUARD.

ENGAGEMENT AT WILLIAMSBURG.

Hand-to-hand Encounter with the Enemy.

WASHINGTON, May 5.—The following despatch has been received at the War Department:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
May 4, 7 o'clock P. M.

To the Hon. Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War:

Our cavalry and horse artillery came up with the enemy's rear guard in their entrenchments, about two miles this side of Williamsburg.

A brisk fight ensued. Just as my aid left, General Smith's division of infantry arrived on the ground, and I presume carried the enemy's works, though I have not heard.

The enemy's rear is strong, but I have force enough up there to answer all purposes.

We have thus far seventy-one heavy guns, and large amounts of tents and ammunition.

All along the lines their works prove to have been most formidable, and I am now fully satisfied of the correctness of the course I have pursued.

The success is brilliant, and you may rest assured that its effects will be of the greatest importance.

There shall be no delay in following up the rebels.

The rebels have been guilty of the most murderous and barbarous conduct in placing torpedoes within the abandoned works, near wells, near springs, near flag-staffs, magazines, and telegraph offices, and in carpet-bags, barrels of flour, etc.

Fortunately, we have not lost many men in this manner. Some four or five have been killed, and perhaps a dozen wounded. I shall make the prisoners remove them at their own peril.

G. B. MCCLELLAN,
Major General.

HEADQUARTERS NEAR WILLIAMSBURG,
May 4—P. M.

The advance of the forces under command of General Stoneman, with the view of ascertaining the position of the enemy, reached this place, which is two and a half miles from Williamsburg, about two o'clock this afternoon, on the road from Yorktown.

The country, in most instances, was laid desolate, and but few of the houses along the road were occupied.

On emerging from a corner of the woods, we came in view of Williamsburg and the enemy's earthworks. At the same time, no guns were visible on the enemy's works, but a regiment of cavalry could be seen approaching, about one mile off, in line of battle.

Captain Gibson's reserve battery was then ordered front, to open on the enemy's approaching cavalry, while a portion of the Sixth United States Cavalry were deployed as skirmishers to the right and left. The fire from the battery was very effective on the enemy's cavalry, but they never changed their course. About two hundred yards to the right of Gibson's battery was an earthwork which had all the appearance of being deserted, when all of a sudden our troops were opened upon by a deadly fire from artillery posted behind the works.

At the same time the rebel cavalry continued advancing until they were checked by a charge made by a portion of the First and Sixth Cavalry, which was performed in a most admirable manner. In more instances than one it was a hand-to-hand encounter with the enemy's cavalry; but, strange to relate, none of our men were taken prisoners, while we captured about twenty-five of the enemy, among whom is Captain Frank Lee, of the Third Florida infantry.

Captain Gibson's battery had fourteen horses killed.

Lieut. DeWolf was mortally wounded.

One of our guns was lost by sticking fast in the mud.

Lieut. Benton, of the First cavalry, and ten men of the same regiment were wounded.

Lieut. McClellan, of the Sixth cavalry, was slightly wounded, as were also twelve others of the same regiment.

Lieut. Colkrees, of the First cavalry, had his horse shot under him, while engaged in a hand-to-hand encounter with two of the enemy. He escaped with a few slight bruises.

Private Noble Irish, of Major Barker's (McClellan) Dragoons, had his horse killed, and was severely wounded in the leg by the explosion of a torpedo while passing through Yorktown.

The rebel cavalry was forced by our men to abandon their position, but the want of infantry prevented our men from advancing on the enemy's works. It being evident that it was useless to attempt further operations, the troops fell back about two hundred yards to await the arrival of infantry. Gen. Hancock's brigade soon after arrived, but it was deemed advisable to defer further operations until to-morrow.

We have information that the enemy are still on the retreat beyond Williamsburg. The rear guard of the enemy is very strong, as was shown to-day.

LATER—MONDAY MORNING.

It commenced raining this morning, and has continued heavily up to this time.

There is no news from Williamsburg, as it is too early in the morning to hear.

We will occupy Williamsburg early this morning. From thence our course will depend upon that taken by the enemy.

THE ORDNANCE CAPTURED AT YORKTOWN.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
May 4—11.20 A. M.

To the Hon. Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War:

An inspection just made shows that the rebels abandoned in their works at Yorktown the following ordnance:

Two 8-inch rifled cannon.
Two 4½-inch rifled cannon.
Sixteen 32-pounders.
Six 42-pounders.
Nineteen 8-inch columbiads.
Four 9-inch Dahlgrens.
One 10-inch columbiad.
One 10-inch mortar.
One 8-inch siege howitzer.

With the carriages and implements complete. Each piece is supplied with seventy-six rounds of ammunition.

On the ramparts, there are also four magazines which have not been examined.

These do not include the guns left at Gloucester Point, and their other works to our left.

G. B. MCCLELLAN,
Major General.

WASHINGTON, May 5.—No further news has been received at the War Department from Fortress Monroe or Yorktown.

The boat for Cherrystone Inlet had probably been delayed by the storm which prevailed in that region.

Very little information has arrived by telegraph from any quarter, and nothing of an unfavorable character.

The Occupation of Baton Rouge Confirmed.

Landing of Gen. Butler's Army at New Orleans.

AN IMMENSE AMOUNT OF COTTON DISCOVERED.

An Enthusiastic Union Meeting.

CHICAGO, April 5.—A special despatch to the *Times*, from Cairo, dated to-day, says: A refugee from Memphis brings news of the occupation of Baton Rouge, La., by the United States forces, and the passage of the river by the United States gunboats.

Gen. Butler's army had landed at New Orleans. An immense amount of cotton had been discovered and seized.

The Union citizens of New Orleans had held a meeting, which was attended by large numbers, who indulged in the most enthusiastic demonstrations of joy.

According to our informant, but little opposition will be made to our gunboats coming up the river.

A few rebel troops, lately enrolled at Baton Rouge, were stationed there, but they fled at the approach of the U. S. fleet.

ST. LOUIS, May 5.—A refugee from the South, who was at New Orleans when our fleet arrived there, says our forces captured a large quantity of cotton, sugar, and other property.

Latest from Pittsburg Landing.

CAIRO, May 5.—The steamer *Antelope*, from Pittsburg Landing on Sunday morning, has arrived here.

In the affair of Farmington, on Saturday, General Pope took between 200 and 300 prisoners, besides an amount of tents and camp equipage, four pieces of artillery, and several hundred muskets.

At the time the *Antelope* left Pittsburg loud and continuous firing was heard, the cause of which was not ascertained.

From Fort Wright.

CAIRO, May 5.—Recent arrivals of deserters from Fort Wright confirm the report that Jeff Thompson's command is there. The actual rebel force at that point is said not to exceed from 3,000 to 4,000.

From California.

SAN FRANCISCO, May 1.—Arrived, Young Hector, from New Bedford; bark Harry Hammond, from Shields. Sailed—Ship Radiance, for Callao; brig Sunny South, for the Amoor River; ship Magola, for Hong Kong; Wing and Gidersleeve, for Callao.

The steamship Golden Gate sailed to-day, for Panama, carrying 300 passengers, and $100,000 in treasure for New York, and $213,000 for England.

Arrival of the California Steamer.

NEW YORK, May 5.—The steamship *Northern Light* arrived this evening from Aspinwall, with $615,000 in treasure from California.

Our recent victories were celebrated at Panama, on the 22d ult., by a reception of the friends of the Union by Consul McKeeo. The United States steamer *Saranac*, Com. Lauman, fired thirty-four guns on the same day.

Advices from Jamaica report that the American schooner *Gilfillan*, from Philadelphia for Jamaica, was burnt on February 10th by the pirate *Nashville*.

The South American mail brings no news of importance.

JEFF DAVIS' COACH[illegible] STATES [illegible]

HE MAKES SOME CURI[illegible]

Disagreement Between Da[illegible]

Hints as to the Rebel P[illegible]

Mrs. Davis Thinks the C[illegible] Played O[illegible]

WASHINGTON, May 5.—The [illegible] reached Washington. It is conta[illegible] yesterday on the Rappahannock:

"A colored man came in to-day f[illegible] the river, and reported himself as Je[illegible] From an examination of him, this ap[illegible] truth. He repeats scraps of convers[illegible] overheard, whilst driving out Mr. and [illegible] the carriage, and between Mrs. Davis a[illegible] came to see him.

"Mr. Davis and General Joseph E. John[illegible] some heated discussions about the latter's retre[illegible] Manassas, Davis disapproving of the measure. He [illegible] ordered a stand to be made at Gordonsville, which Johnston declined to do, and offered to resign. He was even indisposed to go to Yorktown. Mrs. Davis said she thought this was very bad in him, to be unwilling to go and help General Magruder. The coachman overheard the conversation between General Johnston and Davis' wife, the former saying if he had not left Manassas when he did, General McClellan would have come out against him and cut him all to pieces.

"Mrs. Davis read an article from the Richmond *Examiner* to her husband, saying that it was a part of the Yankee plan that Generals Banks and McDowell were to form a junction in Louisa or Caroline county, and move down on Richmond. Davis remarked that he thought it was so, but his generals would take care of them.

"The coachman overheard a conversation between Davis and Dr. Gwin, formerly United States Senator from California. Davis said that he had sent General J. R. Anderson from North Carolina to resist the march of the United States troops from Fredericksburg, and to delay them long enough for him to see the probable result of the contest before Yorktown, so that if that was likely to be unsuccessful, he would have time to extricate his army from the Peninsula and get them into Richmond and out of Virginia; otherwise they would all be caught.

"The coachman represents that Mrs. Davis said 'the Confederacy was about played out;' that if New Orleans was really taken, she had no longer any interest in the matter, as all she had was there, and that it was a great pity they had ever attempted to hold Virginia and the other non-cotton-growing States. She also said to Mrs. W. R. Jones (daughter of Col James Taylor, U. S. Commissary General of Subsistence), who was very anxious to get to Washington, where she has one of her children, not to give herself any trouble, but to stay where she was, and when the Yankees came to Richmond she could go.

"He says Mr. and Mrs. Davis have all their books, clothing, and pictures packed up, ready to move off; that there is much outspoken Union feeling in Richmond; that, having been a waiter in the hotel, he knew all the Union men in the place, and that the Yankees are looked for with much pleasure—more by the whites than even the colored people. Confederate money is not taken when it can be avoided. Mrs. Davis herself was refused when she offered a $10 Confederate note for a purchase. Many of the Richmond people wish the Union troops to come, as they are half-starved out.

"The Bank and Government property is all packed up to be removed to Danville, near the North Carolina line.

"General Johnston did not think the rebels would succeed at Yorktown.

"The coachman overheard an officer say that if they failed at Yorktown and New Orleans, they would leave Virginia."

Numerous and Important Captures made by the Blockading Fleet.

WASHINGTON, May 5.—On April 26th, at 6 40 P. M., the United States steamer *Flambeau*, Lieutenant Commanding Upsham, captured the schooner *Active*, sailing under English colors, about seven miles south of Stono, South Carolina. She was from Nassau, and purported to be bound for New York, with a cargo principally of salt, coffee, and other articles now very much needed in a Southern port. The captain admitted that the families of himself and mate are residents of Charleston. She was sent to New York for adjudication.

On April 26th, the U. S. steamer *Uncas*, Acting Master L. G. Crane, captured the schooner *Belle*, Capt. Crane reports that when about thirty miles off Charleston, S. C., he made a sail running N. W. W., and proceeded on his course, intending to speak her; as he approached her she hove it stays and hauled E. S. E. He then changed his course and gave chase for two hours, when he fired a shot across her bows; she then hoisted the English ensign and continued her course. Another shot was fired across her bow, to which no attention was paid, but a third striking just ahead of her, caused her to heave to. She was from Nassau, N. P., and purported to be bound for Philadelphia, with a cargo of salt, pepper, and soap. The captain, on being boarded, claimed to be in distress, saying he had sprung his foremast and bowsprit the night before. When asked why he carried sail on her, he replied that he wanted to get into the nearest port. The schooner has been sent to New York for adjudication.

On April 19, at 10.30 A. M., the pilot boat *G. W. Blunt*, J. B. Beers commanding, captured the rebel schooner *Wave*, off the coast of South Carolina. She is said to be of sixty tons register; valued at $3,000, and had on board 39 bales of cotton. The captain, Wm. Ryan, and a crew of four men, are residents of Charleston. The vessel belongs, as appears by her papers, to Messrs. Street & West, of Charleston, and was consigned to the house of A. Adelly & Co., Nassau, N. P. The papers contain positive orders to the captain to burn the vessel and sink the papers if in danger of capture. The consignees are forbidden to sell the cotton to the Yankees at any price. She was sent to Philadelphia for adjudication.

The cargo of the *Ella Warley* (*Isabel*), captured by the steamer *Santiago de Cuba*, consisted of pig lead, sheet copper, iron in bundles and slabs, zinc, cases of hardware—which proved to be Enfield rifles and swords—nautical instruments, cotton cards, drugs, quinine, pot soda, cream of tartar, copperas, carboys, castor oil, potash, indigo, soap, paper and stationery, cigars, candles and tallow, codfish, herring, mackerel, butter, cheese, bread, tea, alcohol, gin, and tooth-brushes.

Many articles were found on board, directed to Charleston, S. C. Among others, two fine boxes of cigars, very handsomely gotten up, and inscribed to "His Excellency, President Davis, from John Frazers & Co., Charleston." Her log-book was mutilated, and the names were cut out of such papers as could be laid hold of in the surprise of the capture. Important papers were also discovered, which, it is thought, will show her real character and destination. Several of her passengers and crew have avowed that she was bound to Charleston. Her captain is a resident of Charleston, and has his family there, and the engineers are also from that city. She had on board a well-known Charleston pilot, named Lockwood, engaged at high wages to take her in and out, and others of her officers and passengers are residents of the same place. The coal found on board of her was about sufficient for the voyage from Nassau to Charleston, but not to St. Johns, and the quantity of water was small.

Besides the *Isabel*, the *Santiago de Cuba* seized, on April 26, off the coast of Georgia, clearing from Charleston, S. C., when first discovered, the schooner *Mersey*, with British flag, and register dated Nassau, April 16. The "*Elizabeth*, of Charleston," was visible on her stern. Under the new name, the papers are incorrect. She cleared from Nassau for Baltimore, April 21, with a cargo of salt, coffee, soap, manufactured in New York, drugs, leather, rope, cotton goods, stationery, corn-brooms, tea, sardines, salt, and saltpetre. Also, on April 30, within 15 miles of Charleston, she seized the schooner *Maria*, with the British flag, and her register dated Nassau, April 16th. She left Matanzas on the 20th of March, with cigars, bound to Nassau, via Baggod Island, for salt, but could show no register prior to that obtained at Nassau. Her former name was the *Sallie Rose*, of Charleston, which was also visible under the new paint on her stern. Her cargo consisted of salt, cigars, and cotton cards. Some of the crew of these schooners have said that a large sum of money was promised them if they succeeded in running the blockade.

LATER FROM EUROPE.

THE HAMMONIA AT NEW YORK.

NEW YORK, May 6, 10 o'clock A. M.—The steamship *Hammonia* arrived at midnight from Southampton, from which port she sailed on the 23d ult.

The steamship *China* arrived at Liverpool on the 21st, and the *Etna* and *Jura* on the 23d.

The steamer *Nisbeck*, which sailed with military stores for Canada, is missing.

The British Admiralty had ordered all wooden corvettes, sloops, and gunboats in the navy to be iron-clad and converted into powerful floating Armstrong batteries, the work to be commenced immediately.

The *Royal Sovereign* was in the course of conversion into a cupola vessel, on Captain Coles' plan. She will have a beak placed below the water, acting as a powerful ram.

Consols at London were steady at 93⅞@94 for money and account. Illinois Central and Erie Railroad shares had advanced. There was scarcely any application for discount at the banks.

The Crown Prince of Prussia will be present at the opening of the World's Exhibition.

The London Press on the Battle of Shiloh.

The London *Times*, in an editorial, pronounces the battle of Shiloh a drawn battle, and the first creditable encounter during the war. "But," it adds, "we should be very much mistaken if we thought that the affair is calculated to bring the war to an end, or to discourage the Southern people."

The *Daily News* says that both sides fought with desperate courage, and on both sides the generals seem to have displayed considerable military skill.

The *Shipping Gazette*: "Nothing like the proportion of losses, to the numbers, has occurred since Borodino." [This is an estimate from the numbers originally reported.]

FRANCE.

The Marine Minister was ordered to hasten the construction of iron-plated batteries in the dock-yards. The floating batteries, *Peiho*, *Saigon*, *Palestro*, and *Peschiera*, 14 guns each, were to be launched in May.

Mires, the alleged forger, was at liberty and reinstated to his former position, the Court of Appeal having reversed the original judgment.

Thirty-six bishops had notified the Minister of Public Worship of their intention to repair to Rome, in compliance with the Pope's summons.

On the Paris Bourse, rentes were quoted at 70f. 60c.

GREECE.

Twelve hundred royal troops entered Nauplia on the 20th, and order had been established.

PORTUGAL.

The United States frigate *St. Louis* was at Lisbon.

BAVARIA.

The betrothal of the Grand Duke Ferdinand to the sister of Francis II has been announced.

ITALY.

Bishop Fano has been arrested by order of the King's procureur. The brigand chief Centrillos had been arrested, and one hundred thousand cartouche boxes and four hundred brigands' uniforms seized.

Garibaldi is actively engaged in forming rifle clubs.

The clergy at Locco had sent an address bearing 700 signatures, to the Pope, praying him to renounce his temporal power, and thereby bless Italy.

The Prince of Capua was dead.

The French and English squadrons had been ordered to escort the King of Italy from Genoa to Naples.

HERZEGOVANIA.

Eight thousand Montenegrins and three thousand insurgents attacked the Turks near Niksich. The insurgents were repulsed eight times.

The Montenegrins retreated, leaving 800 dead on the field and carrying away many killed and wounded.

Three hundred and fifty-three Turks were killed, besides many wounded.

The Montenegrins continue to assemble in Donga.

Omar Pasha had ordered Dervish Pasha to fall back on Krestac in order to attack the Turkish forces.

CHINA.

It was rumored that the rebels intend to attack Foo-Chow-Foo.

Commercial Intelligence.

LIVERPOOL, April 22.—Cotton—The sale of 20,000 bales is reported, including 10,000 to speculators and exporters. The market is firm, with an upward tendency, but the prices are unchanged.

STATE OF TRADE.—The Manchester markets are quiet with an advancing tendency.

BREADSTUFFS.—Messrs. Richardson, Spence, & Co., and Wakefield, Nash, & Co., report Flour unchanged and steady. Wheat firm and unchanged, but quiet; red Western, 10s 3d; red Southern, 11s 3d@11s 6d; white Western, 12s; white Southern, 12s@12s 10d. Corn quiet and unchanged; mixed, 28s 6d.

PROVISIONS.—Beef heavy; Pork dull; Bacon quiet, but steady; Lard steady at 42@44s; Tallow quiet.

PRODUCE.—Rosin quiet; common 13s; Spirits of Turpentine steady at 68@69s; Sugar dull; Coffee—no sales; Rice inactive; Ashes quiet and steady.

COTTON.—Another report says Cotton is ⅛d higher, and firm.

LONDON.—The Corn market is quiet and unchanged.

A CONCERT of vocal and instrumental music will be given this evening, at the Spring Garden Institute, corner of Broad and Spring Garden streets, by Messrs. Porter and Bowman, who will be assisted by several talented artists, including the Union Quartet Club, Miss McGill, and Messrs. Parvin, Wood, and Miller. The residents of the northwest have an evening's entertainment of more than ordinary attraction offered them.

DR. CHAPIN'S ILLNESS.—Rev. Dr. E. H. Chapin's illness has assumed such a serious phase that he will probably cease preaching, and, by the advice of his physician, go to Europe, in which case it is his intention to remain abroad a year.