The Press.

TUESDAY, MAY 13, 1862.

THE LATEST WAR NEWS.

The accounts we have received of the naval battle on the Mississippi, between Captain Davis' Union fleet and Commodore Hollins' "Mosquito navy," prove it to have been one of the most desperately contested conflicts of the present war. The rebel iron champion Mallory made particular efforts to sink the gunboat Cincinnati, but by the gallantry of Captain Stemble, of the latter, and the officers and crew under him, such a calamity was arrested. The Mallory, with the rest of the rebel fleet, was finally forced to retreat, but the flag-ship Benton followed the former, and poured a broadside into her, which sunk her. One other of the rebel ships was blown up, and another burned. The Cincinnati was the only vessel on our side injured, and she but slightly.

Intelligence from Gen. Halleck's army up to Saturday last has been received. On Thursday, Gen. Bragg, with a force of 20,000 men, made an attack on Gen. Paine's brigade belonging to Gen. Pope's corps, near Farmington. The brigade desperately contested the field for five hours, until, finding themselves being outflanked, they were forced to retire, which they did in good order. Our loss is stated to have been considerable, and the rebels also suffered severely, in consequence of holding a very exposed position.

We publish this morning, a detailed and graphic account by our correspondent with General Wool's army, of the capture of Norfolk, Portsmouth, and the adjoining districts. The official report of Gen. Wool is also published. The workshops, storehouses, and other buildings of the navy yard, were set on fire by the rebels and destroyed. Part of the dry-dock was also blown up. Our forces have captured about 200 cannon, also large quantities of powder, shot, and shell, and other deadly missiles.

General McClellan's army have reached White House, Cumberland county, twenty miles from Richmond. The rear guard of the enemy is at Tunstall, five miles from White House.

THE RETURNS from Old Point agree that four newspaper correspondents were the first Northerners to enter the city of Norfolk. The fact affords opportunity for a word of eulogy as to the newspaper representatives and their relations to the rebellion. The great Conventions of Charleston, Baltimore, and Chicago, in which were proclaimed the principles that culminated in revolution, were reported by the representatives of Northern newspapers. The latter were thus the unconscious chroniclers of history, and brought to notice the future soldiers and statesmen. As the Southern populaces ventured upon deeds of mutiny and rage, our reporters located themselves in their cities and, at great personal risk, recorded the seizure of fortresses, the passage of ordinances of secession, and the rising to arms. Even after the fall of Fort Sumpter, a reporter of this journal haunted the cities of Charleston and Savannah, and when Washington was imperilled correspondents were not deterred from prowling on Arlington Heights and mingling with the bloodthirsty people of Alexandria. Indeed, the Government derived its ideas of Southern feeling and preparation from the newspapers; for its own system of espionage has been throughout inadequate to the discovery and understanding of the enemy's plans and movements. The newspaper correspondents at Bull Run were noted for their intrepidity, and they were numbered by scores. The greatest rivalry and enterprise subsequently marked them, as can be gleaned from the fact that we have frequently had tidings of battles, sieges, and bombardments through newspaper channels in advance of the Government despatches. So, also, the official reports of war matters have been mysteriously circulated through the journals before they were ready to be submitted to Congress. The President and Secretary of War have been often, in this way, apprised of battles of which they did not know. Indeed, naval and military officers were restrained so far to recognize correspondents, that the latter have been awarded the honor in many cases of hoisting the national flag over the enemy's entrenchments. When this was not the case, they were generally the first to enter the entrenchments.

The fatality attending war reporting has been great. Some of the Western journals lost their whole staffs of correspondents in battle; Fort Donelson, and expeditions to strike; others have been carried into captivity, as more dangerous enemies to the rebellion than regiments of infantry or horse. So shrewdly have they deciphered, at times, the strategy of the campaign, that our military leaders have been compelled to change their policies; and how far the "great strategy" has been indebted to shrewd newspaper suggestions, hints, and conjectures, our generals best know, and we can only guess. Finally, the correspondents became so apt at revealing embryo schemes that they were banned by the War Department. Nevertheless, the newspapers of that time exhibited not less signs of enterprise; for the plucky that rebels in arms could not dismay, was either too shrewd or too indomitable for Federal authority to intimidate. Parents and wives have been relieved a thousand times by the early reports of correspondents. Communities have been gladdened as often by their early chronicles of victories, and they have traced mismanagement and defect to its proper source, quite as thoroughly and more quickly than Congressional committees.

Their mission has not been all a mercenary one, but a labor of enthusiasm which the outside world can scarcely understand. It may be appreciated by the thousands, who cannot complete his record of the times without giving a long chapter to the correspondents.

FOR WHAT manner of men do Breckinridge plotters apologize when they seek to palliate the crime of rebellion? For men who bayonet and dirk the unresisting wounded on the battle-field; who mutilate the dead; who violate the graves of Union soldiers, and carve their bones into ornaments and their skulls into drinking cups; who plant torpedoes and infernal machines in the fields and behind entrenchments which they are too cowardly to defend in honorable strife! These are the men for whom the Breckinridgers offer apologies. These are the "deluded brothers" for whom they plead.

If these are men, what are devils? If this is bravery, what is cowardice? If this is honorable warfare, what is fiendish cruelty? How are brave men to fraternize with such fiends in human shape until their brutishness shall be thoroughly flogged out of them? Our JAMES BUCHANANS may sympathize with such men, inasmuch as they consented to become the tools of their leaders in time past. But it is insult to the friends of the victims of such atrocities to speak of fraternity with the perpetrators.

BY THE ENTERPRISE of our special correspondents we are enabled to present our readers to-day with an elaborate account of the occupation of Norfolk. Few will care to leave the tempting details from these graphic pens to indulge in any reflections on the event, and this brief allusion would be unnecessary, except as it presents to us an opportunity for complimenting General Wool, and the men under his command, for the success of their movement. It is a novel, but certainly an inspiring sight, to see our President and the members of his Cabinet taking part in these military successes. It shows that those in authority do not consider their task mere mappery and closet-war, but a great duty to be discharged, amid danger and death. It is only another evidence of the fidelity and self-denial of Mr. LINCOLN; and the soldiers of the line, whose loyalty he immortalized in his first message, will welcome the sympathy and companionship thus manifested.

FEW could have expected, two short months ago, when the Merrimac committed such frightful havoc among our wooden vessels in Hampton Roads, and when Northern cities were threatened by her exultant officers, that in a brief period she would be destroyed by her own crew to prevent her from falling into the possession of a fleet to which she was no longer an object of dread. In nothing has the superior power of the North been more apparent than in the readiness with which measures were devised to compel this monster of the deep to shrink from a test of her boasted invincibility.

LETTER FROM "OCCASIONAL."

WASHINGTON, May 12, 1862.

The last words that Judge Douglas uttered in public were these:

"The conspiracy to break up this Union is a fact now known to all. Armies are being raised and war levied to accomplish it. There can be but two sides to the controversy. *Every man must be on the side of the United States or against it.* There can be no neutrals in this war. There can be none but patriots and traitors.

"The conspirators have been led to hope that in the Northern States *it would be made a party question, producing civil war between Democrats and Republicans, and the South, being united, could step in with their legions, and help the one to destroy the other, and then conquer the victor.*"

These prophetic and glorious words have been enshrined in the popular heart. They have become the inspiration of the patriot—the text of the Union orator—the creed of the Union soldier. President Lincoln has acted upon them in his administrative policy. His political friends have embodied them in their generous invitation to loyal Democrats to unite with them for the common defence. The nominations made by these men have been generally ratified at the ballot-boxes. Now efforts are put forth in all the adhering States to give renewed vitality to this movement at the coming elections. It is in the midst of these efforts that the "Democratic members of Congress" appear with their ultra party pronunciamiento, the present purpose of which is to oppose the Administration, with the direct object in view of bringing back into power the worst elements of the Secession conspiracy.

It is painful to read this extraordinary manifesto, published under the auspices of men, a few of whom still claim to be believers in the counsels of Judge Douglas, and then to read his final warning words to his countrymen.

"The refusal to give the slightest support or sanction to the war, or to denounce, even in modulated emphasis, the rebellion, is irresistible proof of the ends sought for by the authors and signers of this "Democratic" Address. At no period of human civilization do we find a parallel to the present struggle for free institutions on the American continent. The principles at stake are immutable and immortal. The only structure of Democratic government on earth, and the last—the most precious charter that ever God bestowed upon man—will stand or fall as the war for the American Union triumphs or fails. Foreign nations are watching the progress of this war with breathless interest. It has almost wholly superseded every other topic. Their Parliaments, their writers, their men of science, their Kings, and their peoples, observe, debate, and theorize upon it. The English statesmen and pamphleteers can find no text so fruitful as the American War. The French Emperor discusses it in private and in public. The Russian Czar sends over to our Government words of admiration and cheer. The Italian heroes regard its issue as more decisive of human freedom than any event that has ever taken place in the Old World. In the United States, the war is the only question which vitally and constantly concerns the people. It concerns them in every pulsation and fibre of society, business, kindred, and home. Their nearest relatives and friends are in the army. There is hardly a family in the loyal States that is not represented among the defenders of the Republic. Thousands are in mourning for their sons, brothers, fathers, and friends. The subjects over present with them are the war, its duties, its sufferings, and its results. The pulpit rings with patriotic discourses on the war. The newspapers are crowded with it. In every quarter, in every neighborhood, in every social circle, it is the one single absorbing thought and theme.

Surrounded by such a condition of things at home, and admonished by the exultations and anticipations of our foreign foes, and the hopes and prayers of our foreign friends, "the Democratic members of Congress" *refuse the coldest syllable of comfort to their bleeding country.* They see her grappling with the banded murderers of Liberty, and fold their arms in sneering indifference. They hear her blood-bought victories over the fiends of Secession without a throb of emotion. The Union dead and wounded who have fallen in twenty great conflicts, including Democrats from all the loyal States, arouse no sensibility in their callous bosoms. On the other hand, the whole tone of our country is to encourage them. *Their deliberate contempt for the just and righteous side of this mighty controversy is, in fact, the most eloquent argument that has yet been made in favor of treason.*

What would have been the proper judgment against a party that refused to declare its patriotism in the Revolution? The Democracy have always claimed to be the war organization; and in the second conflict with England, and the last with Mexico, they had no indignation too severe to visit upon those who were cold or hostile. Now, in a far greater crisis than the first, or than either of these, or than all combined, "the Democratic members of Congress" propose to reorganize the Democratic party on the basis of opposition to an Administration which is doing its whole duty to the Republic in her direst agony, and on the theory of withholding their counsel or assistance from those who are fighting our battles.

The scheme of reorganizing a party under certain leaders becomes more odious in view of the infamy which attaches to the bad men who have had it in charge for the last few years. These men are still in the ascendant in its counsels. As they were the agents of the traitors before the rebellion, so do they sympathize with these traitors now that they are in arms. Indeed, "the Democratic members of Congress" anticipate the return, if not of the traitors themselves, to Congress, at least of those who will do as they did when they held seats in our legislative halls.

The Democratic party found its grave under the infamous Administration of James Buchanan. It was assassinated by the tyrants who framed and defended Lecompton and the English bill—who prescribed every honest man that refused to sanction these frauds—who murdered Broderick and defeated Douglas, and who, up to the very last hour, used the confidence of a generous people to strengthen, stimulate, and organize the Secession Conspiracy. The attempt to resurrect it may be successful; but this can never be when those who undertake the task summon the people to its standard by a deliberate insult to the Union men engaged in this great war, and by an equally deliberate expression of sympathy for the enemies of the Government.

OCCASIONAL.

PHOTOGRAPHIC NOVELTIES.—Mr. J. E. Tilton, of Boston, as we noticed some weeks ago, initiated the copying of fine and rare engravings, on a small scale, by means of photography. This was soon taken up by Messrs. Appleton, in New York, and by some photographers in this city—largely and successfully by Mr. Gutekunst, of Arch street. *This* may be obtained at McAllister's and at Earle's. For Mr. F. Leypoldt, foreign bookseller, 1223 Chestnut street, is now being executed, in this reduced but perfect manner, Kaulbach's series of the female characters of Goethe. The two specimens which he has shown us (Margarette going to Church and again in Repentance and Remorse) are beautiful indeed. They are the size of *cartes de visite*, and therefore adapted for the Photographic Album. Of the same size, and one larger, will be a selection from the best illustrations of Gustav Dore—namely, of Dante's Inferno and Perrault's Fairy Tales. At Mr. Leypoldt's may be seen, now and for a few days, a very valuable collection of rare old and modern engravings, just received from Emil Seitz, of New York, the well-known importer of rare prints. From Mr. Leypoldt we have a New York edition, neat and low-priced, of Victor Hugo's new French romance, *Les Misérables*, the last literary excitement in Europe.

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, braid, 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 this morning, at 10 o'clock, by John B. Myers & Co., auctioneers, Nos. 232 and 234 Market street.

EXTRA LARGE SALE TO-DAY—STOCKS, GROUND RENTS AND REAL ESTATE.—Thomas & Sons' catalogue of their sale at 12 o'clock, at the Exchange, comprises 28 PROPERTIES, *a large portion peremptory sales*, affording a chance for large and small safe investment, and for elegant and plain residences, country seats, farms, &c. *See also advertisements, auction head.*

FROM WASHINGTON.

Arrival of an Officer from General McClellan's Army.

INTERESTING ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE OF WILLIAMSBURG.

The Bravery of our Officers and Men during the Engagement.

Invalid Soldiers to be Mustered out of Service.

MORE SECESSIONISTS ARRESTED.

COLLECTION OF TAXES IN INSURGENT DISTRICTS.

A Bill on the Subject Passed by both Houses.

Brig. Gen. Sickles Confirmed.

Special Despatches to "The Press."

WASHINGTON, May 12, 1862.

The Battle of Williamsburg.

Captain DART, assistant adjutant general, and chief of the staff of General SICKLES' Excelsior brigade, arrived in this city this morning from the peninsula, and brings some interesting particulars of the battle of Williamsburg. He states that General HOOKER's division left their camp, four miles this side of Yorktown, on Sunday afternoon, May 4th, and made a forced march until 12 o'clock that night, when they halted within a few miles of Williamsburg. Here the men rested until daylight next morning without shelter, and exposed to a heavy rain storm.

As soon as morning broke they resumed their march, the road leading them through a dense cedar woods, with the difficulties of which they had to contend, as well as the pelting rain, and mud knee deep. The New Jersey brigade, commanded by General FRANK PATTERSON, was in the advance, and about eight o'clock, as it emerged from this woods on an open plain, breastworks were discovered crossing the road in front.

Two batteries were at once got into position on the right and left of the road, and for three hours an artillery fight was kept up, until our pieces had sunk so deep in the mud that they could neither be used with advantage nor moved to another part of the field. The main body of the rebels were concealed in a ravine to the right of their works, running back towards Williamsburg, and the approach to which was well defended by abatis, and an abattis or jungle formed by felling large trees and bushes, behind which their sharpshooters concealed themselves, and kept up a deadly fire upon our men.

About 11 o'clock an attempt was made to dislodge them from this position, our men making a force charge upon it, and driving them out of their rifle pits, and following them into the jungle or ambush as they retreated. It was here that our brave soldiers suffered so terribly, in attempting to maintain the ground they had won, and to overcome the obstructions placed in their way. The enemy outnumbered them, and, lying in ambush, poured in upon them a withering fire. Hundreds fell, but still our men fought on. General BRINTZLEMAN was on the field, and acted like a hero. He was everywhere in the thickest of the fight, cheering the men. There was no "Reserve" to draw upon, and the only chance was that reinforcements would come up. Knowing that this hope inspired the men, General BRINTZLEMAN, whenever he saw a regiment wavering, would take two or three companies from another part of the field, where the fortunes of the day were not so imminent, and rushing to the relief of those who were hard pressed, would animate them with new energy and determination by his aid, and the promise that reinforcements from the main body of the army were in sight and coming up rapidly. In this way the battle was maintained until Hooker's division came through, according to all military principles, the Federals were whipped at three—being outflanked and nearly surrounded,) when reinforcements did arrive, and the victory was won.

The official loss of the Excelsior Brigade alone is 773 dead, wounded, and missing. The first regiment of this brigade lost nineteen out of twenty-seven officers who went into the fight. Five of its captains were killed and two wounded, one fatally. The regiment numbered 800 men, and now musters but 300. This is but one instance. Many other regiments suffered as severely. The loss of the New Jersey brigade is thought to be as great as that of the "Excelsior." They were in the action all day, and Gen. PATTERSON is said to have fought them admirably. He reached the army on Sunday just in time to take command, and in a few hours had an opportunity of proving himself a gallant and skilful officer, and of winning the enduring respect and confidence of his men.

Owing to the character of the ground, and the obstructions with which it was covered, the men very often became separated, but it is said that none attempted to get off the field. Following the example of their enemy, they took to the bushes, and loaded and fired as opportunity offered. Hand-to-hand encounters were frequent, the contending parties were at times so close. In the midst of the fight, a sergeant of the Third Excelsior Regiment was approached by a rebel general, and asked where he belonged. He gave his regiment, when the general exclaimed, "Take that, you G—d d—d Yankee—a shot in the body." The man fired, and the rebel fell, and attempting to fire. The same time raising his pistol and not go off, and before he could recock it, the sergeant killed him. The morning after the fight, a sergeant belonging to the First Excelsior Regiment was found lying on a rebel colonel, both dead, and the sergeant still grasping a knife which he had plunged into the colonel's breast.

After the battle the men slept upon the wet ground where they had fought all day. Worn out with fatigue, wet, and covered with mud, they laid themselves down to rest without having had anything to eat for twenty-four hours, the quartermaster's wagons not having come up. There was no complaint. On the contrary, the campfolks was indulged in as usual, and one unfortunate, lying almost hid in the mud himself, could be heard shouting to a comrade to cover up a rebel who was as severe a test as any. The battle of Williamsburg proved the army of the Potomac to be equal to any emergency, and able to overcome any difficulty.

The Collection of Taxes in Rebel Communities—The Re-organization of State Governments.

The Senate finally passed Mr. DOOLITTLE's bill to-day, for the collection of taxes in insurrectionary districts. It provides that when the revenue cannot be collected in States in rebellion, direct taxes shall be proportionably charged upon all the lands and lots of ground situate therein, the owners of said lots or parcels of land being allowed sixty days after the President issues his proclamation carrying this act into effect, to pay the taxes. The bill provides for the appointment of three tax commissioners, at $3,000 per annum, with $50,000 each security for the faithful performance of their duties, which shall be whenever the commanding general of the forces of the United States enters the insurrectionary State or district. Ample provision is made for seizing the lands, exposing them to sale, &c. The 13th section provides that the proceeds shall be paid into the Treasury of the United States, one-fourth of which shall be paid over to the Governor of said State wherein the lands are situated, or his authorized agent, when such insurrection shall be put down, and the people shall elect a legislature and State officers, who shall take an oath to support the Constitution of the United States, and such fact shall be proclaimed by the President, for the purpose of reimbursing the loyal citizens of said State, or for such other purpose as the State may direct; and one-fourth shall also be paid over to the State as a fund to aid in the colonization or emigration from said State of any free person of African descent who may desire to remove therefrom to Hayti, Liberia, or any other tropical state or colony. This bill is one of the most important passed by Congress during the rebellion, and gives ample evidence of the passage of the confiscation bill, when it may come before the Senate.

To Punish and Prevent Polygamy—An Important Bill.

The Senate Committee on the Judiciary have reported almost a new bill for the one which passed the House, to prevent and punish polygamy, providing that every person having a husband or wife living who shall marry any other person, whether married or single, in a Territory of the United States, or other place over which the United States have exclusive jurisdiction, shall be adjudged guilty of bigamy, and punished by fine and imprisonment, except in cases where a person, by reason of former marriage, whose husband or wife by such marriage shall be absent five years without being known to the person living. The bill repeals all the acts of the Utah Territorial Legislature, which in any wise establish or countenance the practice of polygamy, evasively called spiritual marriage, however disguised by ecclesiastical solemnities, ceremonies, etc. The bill also provides that no corporation for religious or charitable purposes shall be entitled to hold real estate in any Territory, during the existence of territorial Government, of a greater value than one hundred thousand dollars.

Discharge of Enlisted Men.

The following bill passed both Houses to-day, and only awaits the signature of the President to become a law: That the medical inspector be authorized to discharge from the service of the United States any soldier or enlisted man, with his consent, laboring under any physical disability which makes it disadvantageous to the service that he be retained therein, and the certificate of such inspector shall be sufficient evidence of such discharge, *provided* that every such certificate shall appear on its face to have been found on personal inspection of the soldier discharged, describing specifically the nature and origin of such disability.

New Bill on Treason.

Mr. SHELLABARGER, of Ohio, introduced a bill in the House to-day defining and punishing as a high crime the adhering, or giving aid and comfort, to persons engaged in a rebellion against the United States. The bill is introduced to supply what is understood to be required by a recent decision of one of the United States courts at Cincinnati, that it is not treason within the meaning of the act of 1790 to give aid and comfort to a rebellion.

Mr. Lovejoy's Bill—To Secure Freedom.

Mr. LOVEJOY's bill, which passed the House to-day, is as follows:

Be it enacted, That slavery, or involuntary servitude, in all cases whatsoever, except in punishment for crime, (whereof the person shall be duly convicted,) shall henceforth cease, and be prohibited forever, in all the Territories of the United States now existing, or hereafter to be formed or acquired in any way.

The Pacific Railroad Bill.

The Senate select committee on the Pacific Railroad bill reported the House bill to-day, but with slight amendments to the corporators, and also providing for a general telegraph line in connection with the railroad. In other respects the bill remains as it came from the House.

Lieutenant Belger.

The friends of Lieutenant EDWARD A. BELGER, of Philadelphia, now attached to the First Regiment, Excelsior Brigade, will be glad to learn that he was one of the eight officers of that regiment who came out of the battle at Williamsburg uninjured. He fought bravely, and made a narrow escape, being struck by a musket-ball on the clasp of his sword belt.

Confirmations.

The Senate to-day confirmed the nomination of DANIEL E. SICKLES as brigadier general, to date from his original appointment.

JOHN W. HUNT, of New York, to be brigade surgeon.

J. H. MANSFIELD, of Wisconsin, consul at Bogota.

Corporal MARION HOWARD, of the First Company of Infantry, to be second lieutenant in the Fifth Company of Infantry, for good conduct at the battle of Springfield, Mo., where he was wounded.

The Navy Department has appointed THOMAS HOLLAND, of Washington, master's mate, and he is ordered to the New York Navy Yard.

WM. MARTEN, of New York, has been appointed acting master at the New York Navy Yard.

MAGNUS SCHAR, of Newborn, of the U. S. steamer *Hetzel*, has been promoted from gunner's mate to acting master, and is ordered to Hampton Roads.

Philadelphia Contested Election Case.

HARRISBURG, May 12.—No decision has yet been rendered by the Supreme Court on the army vote.

CAPTURE OF NORFOLK.

OFFICIAL REPORT OF GENERAL WOOL.

WASHINGTON, May 12.—The following was received at the War Department to-day:

FORTRESS MONROE, May 12, 1862.

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

On the 9th of May (Friday afternoon), I organized a force to march against Norfolk. On the 10th of May, (Saturday morning,) the troops were landed under the direction of Colonel Crane, at Ocean View, and commenced to march towards Mansfield and Weber, who proceeded on the direct route, by way of Tanner's creek bridge; but finding it on fire, they returned to the Cross Roads, where I joined them, and took the direction of the column. I arrived by the old road, and entered the entrenchments in front of the city at twenty minutes before 5 P. M.

I immediately proceeded towards Norfolk, accompanied by the Hon. Secretary Chase, and met the Mayor and a select committee of the Common Council of Norfolk at the limits of the city, when they surrendered the city agreeably to the terms set forth in the resolutions of the Common Council, presented by the Mayor, W. W. Lamb, which were accepted by me so far as related to the civil rights of the citizens. A copy of the resolutions been been already furnished you. I immediately took possession of the city, and appointed Brigadier General Egbert Viele Military Governor of Norfolk, giving him orders to see that the citizens were protected in all their civil rights. Soon after, I took possession of Gosport and Portsmouth.

The taking of Norfolk caused the destruction of the iron-clad steamer Merrimac, which was blown up by the rebels about 5 o'clock on the morning of the 11th of May, which fact was soon after communicated to you and the President of the United States.

On the 11th I visited the navy yard, and found all the workshops, storehouses, and other buildings in ruins, having been set on fire by the rebels, who at the same time partially blew up the dry dock.

I also visited Craney Island, and found thirty-nine guns of large calibre, most of which were spiked; also, a large number of shot and shells, with about 5,000 pounds of powder, which, with the buildings, were in good order.

As far as I have been able to ascertain, we have taken about 200 cannon, including three at the Sewell's Point batteries, with a large number of shots and shells, as well as many other articles of value stationed at the navy yard, Craney Island, Sewell's Point, and other places.

JOHN E. WOOL,
Major General Commanding.

FROM GEN. McCLELLAN'S ARMY.

A Large Amount of Wheat and Corn Seized.

Our Forces Within 23 Miles of Richmond.

TWO AND A HALF MILES FROM KENT COURT HOUSE, CUMBERLAND, VA., Sunday Morning, May 11, 1862.

A company of the Sixth Cavalry pushed out last night to White House, five miles from here on the Pamunkey river, belonging to the Curtis Estate, owned by a son of Gen. Robert E. Lee.

The company secured 7,000 bushels of wheat and 4,000 bushels of corn.

The rebels had burnt the railroad bridge and torn up the road for some distance towards Richmond.

The distance from White House to Richmond by railroad is twenty-three miles.

The gunboats arrived here this morning, and are now on their way to the White House. The rebels had blockaded the river, for two miles below here, by sinking vessels; but they were blown up without much trouble.

The very guard of the enemy is at Tunstall's depot, five miles from White House.

A contraband, who left Richmond on Friday, reports the city full of sick soldiers, and that the citizens are flocking in from the surrounding country.

NEW YORK, May 12.—A despatch from Baltimore to the *Times* says: General McClellan is now within 20 miles of Richmond. Nothing definite had been heard from the Galena and the gunboats on the James River. One of the latter was reported to have been lost.

HEADQUARTERS, CUMBERLAND, VA., Sunday Evening, May 11.

There has been no movement of troops to-day, as General McClellan was desirous of observing the day, and giving his men an opportunity to rest.

The reports to-day, brought in by scouting parties, sent to the Chickahominy, on the left, a distance of thirteen miles, confirm the burning of both Jones' and the bridge across that river. The enemy was seen in considerable force on the opposite side. There is nothing new from the road to Richmond by way of Spotsylvania Ridge, on the right hand, or the mail-coach road leading from New Kent Court House.

We learn from a contraband, belonging by General Lee, to his Headquarters yesterday, that the troops which retreated by that road are encamped at the toll-gate, some eight or ten miles this side of the city. He met but few troops between that point and Richmond, he was driving a four-horse train, containing a trunk and some private property belonging to General Lee. The General's wife has left the White House, and is stopping with a physician a few miles in advance.

A strong picket of the enemy made its appearance, about two miles from the White House, to-day. They were not interfered with until becoming too bold, when a gunboat, which arrived about one o'clock, shelled them out.

The rear must have been heard at Richmond, as it is only twenty miles off.

THE LATEST.

FORTRESS MONROE, May 12—6 o'clock P. M.—There is nothing new to report from General McClellan's army to-day. The telegraph line to his headquarters works well, and is kept constantly employed with Government business. The crew of the Merrimac have deserted from Pig's Point, and have just come in at Newport News.

FROM GEN. BANKS' ARMY.

NEW MARKET, VA., May 11.—The news of the success at Norfolk and Portsmouth, and the destruction of the Merrimac, was received with intense enthusiasm among our troops. The army bands played the national airs, and the loud and prolonged cheering awoke the mountain echoes, and were heard for miles along the beautiful valley. The only regrets expressed were that such officer and soldier was not present to participate in accomplishing such glorious results.

Two privates of the Vermont Cavalry were captured yesterday by guerillas near the spot where the Ira Harris Guards were shot.

The regimental clerk of the Second Massachusetts Regiment was mortally shot, yesterday, from the woods near Mount Jackson. It is believed that many countrymen, who come into the camp to settle accounts with the quartermasters, are giving information to the rebels, if not in active service themselves. Several arrests have been made to-day of suspicious persons; among others, a youth of fifteen, said to belong to Harper's Ferry, whose brothers are in Ashby's Cavalry. The result of the investigation was not divulged. The ladies who were examined yesterday for complicity in the murder of two of the Harris Guards are reported to have deserted their house last night.

GENERAL McDOWELL'S ARMY.

WASHINGTON, May 12,—The following despatch has been received:

HEADQUARTERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE RAPPAHANNOCK, OPPOSITE FREDERICKSBURG, May 12.

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

The enemy advanced upon the Bowling Green Railroad this afternoon, but fell back after leaving a lieutenant and ten men, who were cut off by the gallant Major Duffie, of the Harris Light Cavalry.

IRVIN MCDOWELL,
Major General Commanding.

Great Naval Battle at Fort Wright.

FULL PARTICULARS OF THE ENGAGEMENT.

DESPERATE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE CINCINNATI AND MALLORY.

THE LATTER VESSEL SUNK BY THE BENTON.

CAIRO, May 11.—The desperation of the rebel cause in the Mississippi valley culminated yesterday, in an attack on the United States flotilla off Fort Wright.

On Saturday morning, at an early hour, eight of their gunboats came around the point above the fort, and boldly advanced towards the flotilla. The Cincinnati, which was stationed at a point where the rebels came up on Friday, did not attract their attention until the third had passed above her. As soon as she was seen, a simultaneous attack was commenced from the whole fleet.

The gunboats made an attack upon her with but little effect, as the guns were poorly aimed.

The Cincinnati, in the meantime, had hauled into the stream, where an iron-clad ram, supposed to be the Mallory, advanced, in face of a continued broadside from the former, until within forty yards of her, and being the faster sailer, succeeded in moving between the Cincinnati and the right bank of the river, when men appeared upon her decks and prepared to board the Cincinnati. This design was frustrated by the Cincinnati throwing hot water from her steam batteries.

In the meantime, the rest of our gunboats had arrived at the scene of action and engaged the rebel fleet.

The Mallory, undaunted by the failure of her attempt to board the Cincinnati, crowded on a full head of steam and came toward that vessel, evidently intending to ram her down.

Captain Stemble, who was in command of the Cincinnati, waited until the rebel monster came within twenty yards, when he fired a broadside into her from his Parrott guns, which did fearful execution.

The two boats were so close together by this time that it was impossible for the gunners of the Cincinnati to serve at their guns. It was only by bringing the steam batteries to bear on them again that the Mallory was compelled to hand off.

Captain Stemble shot the pilot of the Mallory with his revolver. He was himself wounded by a pistol shot fired by the pilot's mate of the Mallory.

While the engagement between the Mallory and Cincinnati was in progress, our shots had exploded the boiler on one of the rebel gunboats, and set fire to another, burning her to the water's edge.

The air was very heavy, and under cover of the dense smoke which hung over the river, the rebel fleet retired.

They were pursued until they gained a shelter under the guns of Fort Wright. None of our boats were injured, except the Cincinnati, and the damage to her was so slight that it can be repaired in twenty-four hours.

Four men on the Cincinnati were wounded, including the master's mate. No other casualties are mentioned.

When the smoke cleared away, and the retreat of the rebel fleet was discovered, a broadside from the flagship Benton was sent after the Mallory. Shortly after she was seen to careen, and then go down with all on board.

Arrival of Sick and Wounded from Gen. Burnside's Army.

NEW YORK, May 12.—The steamer Ellen S. Perry, from Newbern, N. C., on the 5th, arrived at this port this morning, with the mails and sick and wounded soldiers of Gen. Burnside's division. Nearly all the sufferers are privates.

The Wounded Pennsylvanians.

HARRISBURG, May 12—The wounded Pennsylvanians, in charge of Surgeon General Smith, from Williamsburg and Yorktown, will arrive in Philadelphia on the 14th instant, where the hospitals are prepared to receive them.

GENERAL HALLECK'S ARMY.

Gen. Bragg makes an Attack on Paine's Division.

Beauregard Reinforced by General Lovell with 30,000 Men.

THE REBELS REPULSED.

OFFICIAL ACCOUNT OF THE AFFAIR.

CAIRO, May 11.—The steamers Courier and City of Alton arrived here this afternoon from Pittsburg Landing, with news up to Saturday noon, up to which time no general engagement had taken place.

On Thursday, the Second battalion of the Seventh Illinois Cavalry, under command of Major Appington, accompanied General Paine from Farmington on a reconnoissance of the enemy's position.

When about two miles out, the scouts, who had been sent in advance, came back and reported a force of rebel infantry were lying in ambush in the woods on both sides of the road leading from Farmington to Corinth.

After a consultation the Federal force advanced for the purpose of ascertaining the rebel strength. They were surrounded, but succeeded in cutting their way through the rebels, who had formed in the road, and making their way back to camp, bringing off the body of Major Appington, who was killed, and four of our wounded.

A deserter, who came in subsequently, says the rebels lost forty-nine killed, wounded, and missing, of whom a lieutenant colonel and captain were killed.

On Friday the rebel General Bragg's division attacked General Paine in his position, two miles beyond Farmington. A sharp engagement followed, our men fighting bravely, making several bayonet charges on the enemy who were repulsed with great slaughter.

Large reinforcements of the rebels having arrived, our troops retired to Farmington.

We lost nearly two hundred killed and wounded and prisoners. No particulars have been received.

Despatch from Gen. Pope.

PITTSBURG, Tenn., May 11.—The following despatch has just been received at the headquarters of the army of the Mississippi:

NEAR FARMINGTON, May 9, P. M.

To Major General Halleck:

The enemy, 20,000 strong, drove in our pickets beyond Farmington, and advanced against the brigade occupying the further side of the creek, in front of my camp.

The brigade held on for five hours, until, finding the a heavily pressed in front and on the down, and that I could not sustain them without crossing the creek with my whole force, which was contrary to your orders, and would have brought on a general engagement, I withdrew to this side in good order.

The conduct of the troops was excellent, and the withdrawal was made by them very reluctantly.

The enemy made a demonstration to cross, but abandoned the movement.

Our loss was considerable, though I cannot yet tell how great. The enemy being much exposed suffered very severely, one of his batteries being completely disabled, and his infantry line driven back several times. My command is eager for the advance!

JOHN POPE, Major General.

[Farmington is five miles southwest of Corinth.]

The only forces engaged in the conflict referred to in the above despatch, on the Federal side, were Plummer's and Palmer's brigades.

The weather is warm and pleasant. All is quiet in front, the enemy having retired.

PADUCAH, KY., May 12.—Gen. Denver and his staff arrived here yesterday, *en route* for Pittsburg Landing. Two thousand cavalry started from this post on Saturday, on an expedition to act in conjunction with the military forces from Rickman, in pursuit of the rebel cavalry that have been overrunning Western Kentucky and Tennessee recently.

MONTEREY, Tenn., May 10.

To Hon. E. M. Stanton:

The enemy yesterday attacked Gen. Pope's outposts, near Farmington, and drove them back on his main line, which was in position to receive an attack; but the enemy, after a sharp skirmish in front, retreated to Corinth.

Deserters who arrived in our camp this morning report that the enemy suffered heavy losses.

Gen. Pope's loss has not been ascertained.

H. W. HALLECK,
Major General Commanding.

CAIRO, May 12.—(Special to the Chicago *Tribune*.)—The steamer Skylark has just arrived from the fleet. She brings nothing but rumors regarding the naval battle on Saturday.

When the Skylark left, furious cannonading was heard in the direction of Fort Wright, which was plainly distinguishable until the steamer passed Tiptonville.

It is expected that the next news will be the occupation of the bluffs by the United States forces, and the evacuation of the forts.

[Special to the Chicago *Times*.]—The steamer Metora has arrived from Pittsburg Landing, which place she left on Sunday morning.

There has been no general engagement, although the two armies threaten each other more than at any previous time.

The enemy is strengthening his defences for the defeat of our armies. An immense force of negroes are at work felling the trees, and strengthening the earthworks.

It is now known that *General Lovell has reached Corinth*, bringing with him his army of 30,000 men from New Orleans.

Beauregard was preparing his army for a desperate struggle. Our reconnoitering parties invariably meet the enemy, go where they will, and in the woods along the roads the rebels seem present in overpowering numbers.

Our forces are, at the same time, strengthening their position on a grand scale. Roads are being cut through the woods to facilitate the movements of the different divisions, guns are being mounted in great numbers, and nothing is being left wanting on our part to win the contest.

THE REBELS IN SACKCLOTH.

JEFF DAVIS APPOINTS A DAY OF FASTING AND HUMILIATION.

NEW YORK, May 12.—A Richmond paper, of the 6th instant, which was not published yesterday by an officer, publishes a proclamation of Jeff Davis, appointing Friday next as a day of fasting and humiliation, to be observed throughout the Confederacy.

From the Mountain Department.

NEW YORK, May 12.—A despatch from Parkersburg to the *Times* says: The two guerillas recently captured were hung at Chester on the 9th. Generals Schenck and Milroy are safe.

LATER FROM EUROPE.

ARRIVAL OF THE ETNA AT NEW YORK.

The English Press much Concerned about the American War.

NEW YORK, May 12.—The steamship Etna, from Liverpool, arrived at this port at 8 o'clock to-night.

Her dates are Queenstown are to the 1st of May.

The Paris correspondent of the London *Herald* writes: A strong feeling has grown up here in favor of intervention in America. Some Frenchmen have lost so much of their sympathy, and are now decidedly in favor of the Northern party in Paris. It is believed that very serious overtures have been made by the French Cabinet to Lord Palmerston, with a view to a joint offer to the belligerent governments to put an end to the war, which, according to official information received here, is