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The Press.

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The Press.

MONDAY, AUGUST 11, 1862.

FROM MEMPHIS.

An Unfortunate State of Affairs—Six Commanders in Eight Weeks—Gen. Sherman's Administration Passes Abolished—The Effect Injurious—Threatened Attack on the City—All the Municipal Officers Illegally Elected through an Informality—The Police entirely Secessionists—Some of their Outrages—Seizure of Escaped Negroes—The Scare on the Memphis and Ohio Railroad—Deserted Houses—Story of Escaped Contraband—All the Negroes Ordered to be Burned by Gen. Bragg—The Modus Operandi.

[Special Correspondence of The Press.]

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Aug. 2, 1862.

The state of affairs in this city is most unfortunate. Not only Secessionists but Union men are completely at a loss. The Secessionists complain bitterly of their treatment, and with some reason. The Union men are fast verging over towards Secessionism, and without reason. A Secessionist complained to me to-day that all Union feeling was being destroyed by the course now pursued by the military authorities. My only reply was, that the Union sentiment, which could be turned into Secession sympathy by a few days or weeks of maladministration or mismanagement was not worth securing. The fact is, all the *bona fide* Union men, the men whose their love for the Union was a matter of principle and conviction, left for the North when they found they could no longer hold and express their sentiments with safety. Those who remain are, with a few notable exceptions, men of no principle at all, except to save their property, and keep a whole skin; they are men who have in a hundred ways recognized and aided and abetted the Southern Confederacy—men who simply went along about their own business, taking only such part in politics as seemed at the time to be necessary to the preservation of their property. These men hold in their sacred bosoms all the Union feeling there is in the South, and not only are they very few in number, but their Union feeling is of that excessively diluted sort that would be stamped in the North as rank Secessionism. Now, pray, what is the object in endeavoring to conciliate such men, and make them advocates of the Government? You can never make zealous Union men of them, any more than the Confederates could make them zealous Secessionists. There is none of that stuff in them of which patriots, or, in fact, enthusiasts in any cause except their own, are made. We waste our time in trying to secure them, and when secured they are hardly worth having at any price.

But still, it must be remembered that they constitute a portion of the population, and that having never fought against us, they are entitled to a certain amount of protection for their lives and property. The people of the South may be divided into two classes; those who are to be subdued, either by an effectual thrashing, or by extermination, and the class above mentioned, who are simply valuable as they contribute to the material wealth of the nation. A firm, consistent administration of justice will do for both these classes just what should be done. It will punish the guilty and protect the innocent, while it rewards the meritorious. Now it is complained by many, who have a right to complain if anything goes wrong, that justice is not administered, and that there has been no consistent policy, from the beginning of the Federal occupation to the present time. I have endeavored to arrive at a conclusion in regard to the foundation of these complaints, and I will give you the result of my investigations. I have paid no attention to the outcries of Secessionists, or to the cant about "conciliating" Union sentiment. I have busied myself solely with facts.

One, and perhaps the radical difficulty in the administration of the affairs of this department, has been, that in eight weeks there have been six different commanding officers to the post. First came Col. Fitch, who is universally commended for his conciliatory policy, and who, from his antecedents, might reasonably have been expected to be acceptable to the Secesh. But he had not the force necessary to back up any very sweeping or severe measures, even if he had been minded to take them. Then came Col. Slack, who got his name so frequently into the papers, and who is now running for Congress in some place in Indiana. Then came Lew Wallace, who staid but a short time, but is generally said to have done very well while he did stay. He started a paper, and then went to Washington and made a speech. I hear he is coming back in a few days. I have every reason to believe that he will be a good substitute for General Sherman. Time will show. Then came General Grant, who, as soon as he had got things to working smoothly, was ordered to Corinth. His departure left Gen. Hovey in command, who spread himself in Order No. 1, his first and last official act. I have already written you of its effect. Last of all came Sherman, also.

Now let us see what General Sherman has done. First, he abolishes passes. Result, everybody passes to and fro without difficulty, and the very Secessionists who were afraid, after Order No. 1, to stay in the city, are coming back every day and walking our streets. Every chance is allowed for spies to come and go, and do their work. The Granada *Appeal* comes into town every day. The correspondent of the Chicago *Times* keeps his little underground railroad going every day, and has constant communication with his Secesh brethren, who furnish the Southern news for that patriotic sheet. Sometimes he goes to them and sometimes they come to him. I fear we shall soon see evil results from this loose policy. Fearful rumors are flying about, and I heard to-day, from a man who is generally well informed, that there were bodies of troops all about us, which might, at any time, concentrate in sufficient force to attack the city. But let that pass.

I have written you, also, about Gen. Sherman's letter to the Mayor and Common Council, requesting them to appoint a police force and agreeing to aid them in collecting the taxes to support them. I have stated what appeared to me to be the inconsistency and the illegality of the measure, but I forgot to state what is really the cream of the joke, that, owing to sundry informalities, this Mayor and Board are generally believed to have been illegally elected, and that this view of the case was admitted by Gen. Sherman when he speaks of their inability to collect the State and County taxes. So these men are simply an irresponsible, unofficial assemblage of citizens. I now propose to state its practical results, "so far as we have got." In the first place, "John Park, mayor," is one of those "*bilinguæ Trojani*," who felt themselves compelled to take the oath to the Southern Confederacy, and to do all they could to promote its objects, until the Federal fleet arrived, when they immediately felt themselves called upon to take the oath to the Federal Government, and do all they could to support that. The support of these interesting and ingenuous patriots consisted, in both instances, in filling all the offices they could get, provided there were emoluments attached to them. To the hands of the Mayor and a Police Committee, of the same political tribe as the Mayor, was committed the task of nominating the policemen. The list numbers sixty-eight, with scarcely an exception Irish, and *nearly all members of the police force under the Confederate Government*. The old Chief of Police, the right-hand man of the Confederate Provost Marshal, is a member of this precious body of scoundrels, and all the notorious detectives, who hunted down Union men, imprisoned them, levied black mail on them, searched out their cotton and sugar, sold it, and then stole it again and then burned it; impressed men into the army, wreaked their private revenge on their own enemies, and lent themselves ready tools to the private malice of others, broke into Union houses and plundered them; in short, men who did all the spying, accusing, imprisoning, impressing, and perpetrated all the arbitrary cruelties and wanton outrages of the Confederate authorities, together with occasionally a little private business of their own, are now, under the authority, and with the implied sanction of the military authorities here, repeating their acts. These men used to take the cotton and sugar belonging to Union men without the color of authority, and, in fact, without the pretence of any, except their own motion, and carry it to the levee ostensibly to be burned. They would then go to the provost marshal and represent that they had some cotton on the levee which they had sold, and carry away on their drays twice or even ten times as much as they had a permit for, and sell it; after which they would often seize it again and carry it down to be burned. Of course this is now stopped. When I say they are repeating these acts, I, of course, mean with the limitations and additions which naturally arise from the changed condition of things. The insolence, the petty outrages, the black mail, and such things are repeated, and the profits formerly made in cotton and sugar, are more than replaced by a very lucrative trade in negroes, which they have instituted for their own benefit.

Under the Confederates no policeman was allowed to touch a negro. The enlisted soldiers attended to everything pertaining to the inevitable Sambo. The same precaution ought to be observed here, and I hope, will be, as soon as the enormities which I am about to relate are fairly placed before the authorities. These policemen seize upon negroes in the streets, and convey them to some place as yet undiscovered, hide them until night, and then run them out of our lines and sell them, or get a reward for bringing them back. Great numbers of fugitives are daily coming to our lines. The soldiers pass them in, and before they can get to the fortifications, where they would be safe, some of them are sure to be gobbled by these policemen, who are always on the watch. They are held until, in some of the Memphis papers, an advertisement appears which suits the case pretty well, and then they are run through the lines in the night, and Mr. Policeman gets his reward of ten, twenty, or a hundred *dollars*. If the negro has a pass, they tear it up. If he has free papers, they tear them up. They give him, of course, no opportunity to identify himself. Negroes who are regularly employed on the wharf-boat Eclipse, employed and paid by the Government, have been thus seized on their way to dinner, and having no pass, as Gen. Sherman has abolished passes, are taken on the very corners of our public streets, and hurried off to the secret place of confinement. I saw the other day what I now suppose was one of these cases; a vile-looking Irishman, about five feet high, with a club in his hand, leading along by the collar a fine, intelligent looking, stalwart negro, six feet high, and big enough to eat his tyrant at a single meal.

Now, what do you think of all this? I suppose it is one of the "inevitable results of a state of civil war," isn't it? Oh, yes, of course! I have some reason to believe that these matters are attracting attention in quarters where they can be set right. Memphis is the centre of a very important section of country, and should have a firm, consistent, vigilant, military government. Some one should have been sent here in the very first place who would initiate a policy and carry it out, as General Butler has done in New Orleans. Even if it were not, in all respects, the best that could have been devised, it would have a character of permanence and consistency, *with* some certain theory, that would be worth a great deal in this panic-stricken, distracted country. Gov. Johnson ought to have come here at the first occupation by the Federal fleet, and staid until matters were worked into some recoganizable shape. But even his visit seems to be indefinitely postponed.

The grand scare on the Memphis and Ohio railroad and the towns along the line, proves to have been in great part unfounded. No bridges were burned that cost more than six hours' labor to repair them, and there was no fighting of any great account.

A military commission, composed of three officers, is now in session in this city. They are to examine all the cases of prisoners now confined for military or civil offences, and have power to punish by fine or imprisonment or death. Their records are secret, and their decisions also. They allow the accused the benefit of counsel to cross-examine witnesses, and of process to compel the attendance of witnesses in their behalf. After they shall have made a general jail delivery, they are to try such cases as may be brought before them.

Besides this body, there is another, composed also of military men, called the *Commissioners of Confiscated Property*. They are very busily engaged in ascertaining what houses and other property there are in the city belonging to parties now within the enemy's lines. Up to last night the number reported by their ward agents amounted to three hundred and twenty-five. The commissioners, in the name of Capt. Henry S. Fitch, quartermaster of the post, lease these premises to applicants for periods varying from one to twelve months. It is required that the rent be paid monthly in advance, the first month being paid at the time of making the lease. The lease is conditioned "upon the continued loyalty and good conduct" of the tenant. There are many persons in this city living in houses for which they are not paying rent; these will all be brought under the order of Gen. Sherman regarding "all vacant, abandoned, and confiscated buildings in the city of Memphis." The amount of rent charged is based upon an estimate of the value of the property made by the commissioners.

Yesterday morning some twenty negroes, who had escaped from the rebel army South, entered our lines at about eight o'clock, having travelled all night. They report, as the reason of their running away, that General Bragg has ordered all the negroes to be burned. A batch of ten or twenty are driven into a sort of corral or pen, ten feet square, formed of dry rails, bushes, and other highly combustible material, and these are fired and the negroes roasted alive, a guard being set around the pen to shoot all who attempt to escape. All these negroes have heard of these things, and one, an old man, had actually seen his own son driven into one of these pens and roasted to death, in company with several others. He fled from the horrid scene home to his wife and family, and told them that he could not stand it any longer; they might stay and keep out of harm's way if they could, but he was going to make a break for the North, and trust to God to see them some happier day. It is probable that somebody down there has discovered a mare's nest—an attempted revolt—a secret conspiracy, or something of the sort; and the usual course of discipline is resorted to to "strike a wholesome terror into the blacks." Verily, great and beneficent is the patriarchal system! "But this is an exceptional case!" Not so. It is the logical result of the theory and doctrine of human slavery; and ever since the beginning of the world the history of slavery has recorded similar barbarities in similar cases. There is no exception about it—it is a rule.

The fleet has left Vicksburg—the opening of the Mississippi is still *in esse*. When they passed Greensville they found the batteries increased to fourteen guns, which they dismounted and silenced. The Confederates now have all the liberty they wish for crossing men and supplies into Arkansas and Texas. CASCO.

FROM THE ARMY OF VIRGINIA.

[Special Correspondence of The Press.]

HEADQUARTERS GEN. GEARY'S BRIGADE,
NEAR LITTLE WASHINGTON, Va., Aug. 3d, 1862.

The most important event that has transpired since I last wrote you has been the arrival at headquarters of Major General Pope, commander-in-chief of the Army of Virginia. For many days his arrival at any moment was looked for, but it was reserved for Friday, August 1, 1862, to chronicle the distinguished arrival upon the field of action. Great delight was manifested by the troops when it became known that their leader was in their very midst, and on Sunday morning following (yesterday) would present himself to them at grand review. The looked-for morning arrived, and with it came the hum of busy preparation going forward throughout the length and breadth of the camp. The hour fixed for the review was 7½ A. M., and at the time named the various divisions and brigades might be seen, with colors flying and music playing, marching into the field selected as the place for the grand review. I could scarcely bring myself to believe that it was the Holy Sabbath day. The peaceful stillness of the morning was broken in upon by the noisy clangor of martial music, the loud commands of the officers, the heavy movements of the troops, the loud rumbling of the artillery, guns and caissons; columns, divisions, and regiments wheeling, marching, and countermarching in every direction. Mounted orderlies (a la J. Gilpin, Esq.) galloping hither and thither, as though the issue of life or death depended on their speed; field, staff, and line officers go dashing by, swelling with all the importance of sword and epaulets; noise, bustle, and confusion disturb the holy stillness and sanctity of the day, and were it not that a little apart from this scene a wanderer might detect a more quiet stillness in the air, perhaps a brighter blue upon the sky, and all over the face of nature a peaceful calmness, indicative of a day of rest, it would never occur to the mind that this was the one day in seven set apart for rest and the worship of our Father who art in Heaven.

At 7½ o'clock Major General Banks and staff made their appearance upon the field. At 8 20 the signs gave indication of the approach of the commander-in-chief of the Army of Virginia, whose appearance was attended by all the customary honors paid to a distinguished arrival. General Pope, after exchanging courtesies with the various generals present, at once began the review. Riding slowly along the lines, he closely examined each regiment as he passed, and in no single instance did he acknowledge, in any, the slightest degree, the regimental honors paid him in dipping the State and National flags. I have always questioned the propriety of this dipping or lowering the flag as a mark of honor to any man; but it strikes me that whenever such an honor is extended to any one, some slight acknowledgment at least is due from the party thus honored.

Having passed in review before the various divisions, returning to the front of the troops, General Pope, in acknowledgment of the order "present arms," slightly raised his cap, bowed, and turning to General Banks, exchanged a few words with him, and calling to his chief of staff, rode from the field. Immediately after the departure of General Pope, the troops were formed in columns, and then ordered by column to close in mass, which order having been executed, Divine services were held by the Rev. Messrs. Quint, of the 2d Massachusetts, and Winslow, of the 5th Connecticut. I confess that I do not understand by what logic it is expected to receive a Divine blessing in the face of a bold and flagrant violation of Divine law. To my mind, I can discover no good and sufficient reason why a grand review should be fixed for a Sabbath day. We are instructed to regard the day as sacredly set apart as a day of rest, on which all unnecessary labor is to be suspended, and both rational and irrational beings may recruit exhausted energies, and man, in pious exercises, gain one day's march nearer his eternal home. It may be a military necessity that calls for a body of troops, compelling them to stand for four hours in the hot sun, in order that they may be viewed by a newly-arrived major general, but I very much question whether, if tested by the magnet of the moral law, or even by the strict letter of military law, any *necessity* can ever be found for violating God's laws, at the same time we violate the laws of man. As a general thing, military necessities are but little more than military excuses for doing unlawful and forbidden acts. It is a significant fact in the history of nations, that whenever military necessity has induced commanders of armies to engage in acts and movements in violation of the laws of God, the party taking the initiatory step generally finds that God will not hold him guiltless who bids defiance to his holy commandments.

One incident of the service yesterday I cannot pass unnoticed. It was a scene, once beheld, can never be forgotten. Grouped together around a "caisson," upon which stood the servant of God, were gathered many thousand men, soldiers of the grand army of the United States—men with weather-beaten countenances but warm hearts, standing there, in the heat of the day, with upturned faces, and, in more than one instance, with moistened eyes, listening to the words of eternal life as they fell from the lips of the servant of God. The address was brief, and listened to with marked attention. At the close of the exercises the regimental bands struck up that good old tune, Old Hundred.

The effect was sublimely beautiful. Picture to the mind's eye a scene like the following: A vast, gently-sloping plain, outstretching far and wide, encompassed on every side by grand, old hills, whose wooded brows touch the very heavens; fields of waving grain, as far as the eye can reach; the noisy clamor of the adjacent camps for a moment is exchanged for the soft stillness of repose; and, indeed, for the time, everything breathes the solemn quietude of a day of rest. The heart naturally yields to the feelings caused by the scene around, and turning backward the pages of the book of life for a while, it is lost in the sweet occupation of

"Walking with feet of youth
The sunny days of yore."

Then hark! What sound of marvellous sweetness is that which comes so gently stealing upon the enraptured sense? It swells and swells upon the light air waves, upon which it is carried forward to the wooded aisles of Nature's temples, from whose leafy chambers it is echoed back with a double sweetness, and, rising upward through the azure vault above, it floats, circling at length a sweet incense around the throne of God in Heaven. Many times and oft have I listened to the music of Old Hundred in the house of God, where,

Through long-drawn aisle and fretted vault,
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise,

but never before I have so deeply felt the effect of that music as on this Sabbath morn in camp. And as I listened to the concord of sweet sounds, the sense of sight for a moment was suspended. I beheld no longer the face of grim-visaged war, but by the sense of sound I fancied I again heard the angel proclaiming to an unhappy people those words of love and mercy, "Peace on earth and good-will to man." Amen.

It will be very gratifying to the numerous friends of Lieut. Thos. H. Elliot to learn that on Saturday last he was the recipient of a commission from the War Department as adjutant general, with the rank of captain. Capt. Elliot has long been acting as adjutant general to Gen. Geary, is perfectly conversant with the duties of the position, and, in his advancement, receives the congratulations of both men and officers of the 28th Regiment P. V., as well as the other regiments comprising the 1st Brigade, 2d Division Army of Virginia. The Captain made his appearance yesterday, at the grand review, for the first time, with the double bar on his shoulder, and was the observed of all observers, as he went dashing by, bearing orders, or exhibited his splendid equestrianism, as with graceful ease he controlled his mettled steed!

The brigade, composed exclusively of Ohio troops, formerly commanded by General Tyler, of General Shields' division, has been assigned to Gen Geary's command. This brigade (Tyler's) is famous for heroism displayed at the first battle of Winchester. As may be remembered, this brigade made several terrific charges upon the stone wall behind which the enemy were ensconced, driving them from their position, and into a field beyond, capturing in their course two guns. More recently they have distinguished themselves in the valley of the Shenandoah, under Gens Banks and McDowell; and now, since they have been assigned to this brigade, they will have still other opportunities to achieve fresh laurels by the side of men who have already won and now wear, the imperishable laurels of many a hard-contested field. I am glad thus to be able to communicate that Gen. Geary at last has assigned to him a command commensurate with his merit and rank as an officer.

On Saturday last, that dashing yet cautious officer, Gen. Crawford, with a small force of cavalry, made a brilliant raid on Orange C. H. He there encountered two regiments of Robinson's Cavalry. Gen. Crawford charged upon the "rebs," drove them back, killed 12, captured 52, with a loss on our side of two killed and several wounded. After remaining there some four hours in the town, he retired in good order to Culpeper. The rebels have long boasted of their successes achieved by means of these dashing skirmishes, or raids, as they may be called. They will soon learn that two can play at the same game, and with quite as good success.

In my journeyings through Virginia and the South, in the capacity of correspondent, I take great pleasure in chronicling incidents like the following: In the village of Little Washington, which is situated about two and a half miles from this place, there resided, at the time this rebellion broke out, a gentleman and his wife. The name of the husband is Dow, by profession a physician. At this time the Doctor was the principal of a seminary for young ladies, and with the valuable assistance of his highly-educated and accomplished lady, was rapidly acquiring both fame and fortune. From the first outbreak of treason the Doctor has stood boldly forward as the champion of loyalty, and fearlessly set his back against the tide of secession and treachery. As a consequence, his traitorous patients and patrons withdrew from him the light of their countenances. Sustained by an unfaltering trust in the cause of freedom, he was willing to sacrifice anything for his country. On the approach of Union troops in this vicinity, with commendable zeal and charity, the Doctor opened at once the hospitalities of his house; offering freely, seeking no other recompense than a consciousness of having done his duty, and aided in his humble way to crush out the rebellion, that was sucking the life-blood of his beloved country. Having heard that considerable sickness prevailed in the camps, he at once threw open his doors, converted his house into a hospital, gathered there as many sick as he could accommodate, and, with his noble wife, attended, nursed, and carefully watched by the bedside of the Union soldier. Surely, if the blessings of Heaven ought ever to descend upon any one, methinks a halo of glory will ever encircle the hearth of such a family as Dr. Dow and his devoted wife.

Instances of this character are exceedingly rare in this portion of our land. Common experience has taught us to exclaim:

"Alas, for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun."

More noticeable, then, is a case like that I have mentioned, and it is suggested, that inasmuch as Dr. Dow has declared his firm, undisguised loyalty, and as from long residence in this vicinity, he is perfectly familiar with the diseases incident to this climate, it would be a merited reward to tender to him an appointment of surgeon in the army of the United States. At present the Doctor holds the temporary appointment of physician to hospitals in the village of Little Washington. It is but due to him that some reward be made to him for his loyalty and firmness in this the hour of our country's greatest trial. CHIP.

FROM THE MISSISSIPPI FLEET.

[Special Correspondence of The Press.]

U. S. GULF SQUADRON, BELOW VICKSBURG,
Mississippi River, July 18, 1862.

Once more, through the bustle and noise of war, I salute you. At the time of the unexpected attack of the rebel iron-clad ram Arkansas, the squadron were in no position to defend themselves; no line of battle was formed. Steam-sloops, gunboats, iron-clads, rams, transports—all were mixed together, afraid to fire, lest they might injure each other. Amid the confusion and excitement, the Arkansas made her way through them all—not a gun did she fire until the Carondelet and a number of gunboats, extricating themselves from the mass, gave battle. The ram fought well, firing grape and shrapnel. Finally, she was successfully driven off, and obliged to seek protection under the batteries of Vicksburg, with a loss of eleven killed, including the pilot. Capt. Isaac N. Brown, commanding, received a wound over the eye. Our loss is estimated, killed and wounded, to be not less than eighty. It is unnecessary for me to say here who is to blame in allowing the rebel ram to make her escape without being destroyed. Between the two flag officers, Farragut and Davis, rests the matter to be settled. Perhaps the Navy Department will take a hand—who knows?

On the night of the 16th of July, Flag Officer Farragut's fleet passed down the river, and passed the batteries under a most terrific fire (the Arkansas remained close in under the batteries); and, in the intense darkness of the night, escaped all discovery. Our loss I have not fully learned.

The Hartford lost three men killed, and one master's mate named Lonsberry. Among the wounded is Capt. John L. Broome, United States marines, slightly, over the eye and the back, with splinters. The gunboat Wyoming's damages were so severe that she had to run ashore to keep from sinking; her damages have been temporarily patched up, and, in tow with several of the gunboats, she has been sent to New Orleans for full repairs. The gunboat Sciota had two men wounded, and the gunboat Pinola two killed. The loss of the Richmond and the remainder of fleet I have not learned.

Lieut. Heisler, second marine of the Hartford, who was sent home sick, from slight complaint of the bowels, contracted in the climate, died as the steamboat reached Memphis.

Since the rebel ram has taken up her position under the batteries of the enemy, the scene resembles somewhat the fleet that watched at Hampton Roads, so attentively, the Merrimac some months ago.

The flag officer had his arrangements all made last night (July 17) to take the large sloops up, the Hartford, Brooklyn, and Richmond, under the batteries and attack the ram; a very absurd, hazardous project, that, if carried into execution, would result in the loss of one or two of the best ships that our navy could boast of, with a great sacrifice of life. I hope he will not attempt it. Every officer in the squadron objects to it, excepting a few rabid men that can hardly see farther than their noses.

Captain Wm. Porter, commanding the iron-clad gunboat Essex, with a number of rams, has offered his services to destroy the troublesome rebel. A much more sane idea, the vessels being suited and well adapted for such service. I have not heard as yet whether the flag officer gave up his plan or not. I sincerely hope that he has. Nine of Porter's mortar fleet have been ordered to Hampton Roads, to report to Flag-officer Goldsborough, perhaps for service on James river.

A very disgraceful affair has occurred in connection with one of the mortar boats that had been hard and fast aground for a number of weeks. The commanding officer received orders from Captain William Renshaw, commanding the remaining portion of the rams, to burn his boat at the appearance of the ram, as it was conjectured that she would attack the lower squadron. Either mistaking the order or doing it intentionally, he set the mortar boat on fire, blowing the mortar into the middle of the river, and the two 32-pounders Heaven knows where, presenting to the enemy, from the dense cloud of smoke issuing from it, that a feeling of panic had seized the mortar fleet. An investigation should be made into such proceedings.

The United States steam sloop Brooklyn has held her position, above the rest of the fleet, in range of a number of the batteries. To-day, July 18, the shot becoming too thick, she dropped down, out of reach of the batteries. Three German deserters made their escape last night, from the Vicksburg shore, amid volleys of musketry from the rebel infantry. They brought information that the ram had been considerably damaged, from the attack on the 16th, and that our mortars frightened the men so that they attempted to leave her, but were driven back at the point of the bayonet.

LATER NEWS,

received from the enemy, confirms the statement that the Arkansas' loss was ten killed and fourteen wounded. No mention is made of Capt. I. N. Brown being injured. The rebel army officers requested him to attack the fleet. He said to them, "I have attacked, single-handed, one of the greatest squadrons that ever existed, and by luck of fortune escaped being mashed to atoms. If any army officer or navy desires to attack the fleet, there lies my vessel, alongside of the bank of your city, take her, she is at your service; as for myself, I will not make the attack, if I can prevent it."

Two more iron-clad rams are reported to be up the Yazoo river, one of which is the famous Star of the West, of Fort Sumpter celebrity, seized at New Orleans at the first outbreak of the war. She is similar in most respects to the Sumpter. The western Gulf Squadron below Vicksburg is arranged in regular line of battle, and ready at a moment to resist the attack of any number of rams. First, in advance, lies the staunch old Brooklyn; on her port quarter the sloop Oneida, starboard quarter the sloop Iroquois, right astern the flagship Hartford, astern of her the United States steam-sloop Richmond, guarding the point below the little Sciota. The remainder of the squadron is as industriously employed. Lying alongside of the right-hand bank is the captured ram Sumpter, Lieut. Irving commanding, undergoing repairs, and also the army transports.

JULY 20.—As usual, the mortars have opened the ball bright and early, one mortar exploding right over the ram; if the fuse had lasted a few seconds longer it might have gone down her smoke-stack blowing the ram to atoms; how unfortunate! A combined attack of Farragut's and Davis' squadrons is to be made to-night, July 22, to destroy the Arkansas. When this business is over the Gulf Western Squadron will take their departure from the Mississippi river, leaving it in the possession of Flag Officer Davis, and once more enabling us to snuff the healthy air of sea breeze. Sickness still prevails in our midst. Brigadier General Williams remarked that out of his three thousand men, only one thousand of them are ready for active service. Seven died yesterday in one regiment, numbering four to six hundred men. Dr. Faulty, fleet surgeon, reports that the health of the squadron is in no way favorable. MAGNOLIA.

VERY LATE FROM THE SOUTH.

One Day Later from Richmond.

THE FIGHT AT ORANGE COURT HOUSE.

The Rebels Claim a Victory.

INTERESTING FROM LOUDOUN AND FAIRFAX COUNTIES.

YANKEE OUTRAGES IN NANSEMOND AND ISLE OF WIGHT.

A "Reign of Terror" Prevailing.

PEOPLE SECRETING THEMSELVES IN THE FORESTS.

Federal Prisoners Escape from Richmond.

Order Concerning Substitutes in the Rebel Army.

THE RETALIATORY ORDER.

Bitter Invectives Against General Pope.

WONDERFUL MAGNANIMITY OF THE RICHMOND ENQUIRER.

It Vindicates Gen. McClellan Against Senator Chandler.

SKIRMISH NEAR MALVERN HILL.

[From the Richmond Examiner, August 6.]

It was reported in the city yesterday, that the enemy had attacked our advanced forces yesterday morning, and succeeded in taking and holding Malvern Hill; but, from a gentleman who yesterday evening came up from that neighborhood, we learn there is no truth in the report. Our informant says that an early hour a smart skirmish was brought on some distance below Turkey creek, by an attempt of the enemy to extend his lines in the direction of Richmond; but that he was at once attacked and driven back in confusion to the cover of his entrenchments. We are as yet uninformed of the particulars.

We have since learned that the Caskie Rangers of this city were in the skirmish of yesterday, and suffered severely. It is reported that several were captured by the enemy.

MOVEMENTS OF M'CLELLAN.

The demonstration of the enemy on the south bank of the river on Friday last, is not thought to look to permanent occupation. It was, doubtless, only designed to scour the county of Prince George as a precaution against another midnight attack by our artillerists.

AN EMEUTE BETWEEN YANKEES AND NEGROES.

[From the Richmond Examiner, August 6.]

MOBILE, August 4, 1862.—A special despatch to the *Advertiser and Register* from Jackson, 30th ult., says: "Passengers from Memphis report that an emeute had broken out between the Yankees and the negroes working on the fortifications. The Yankees shot a number of the negroes."

SKIRMISH AT ORANGE COURT-HOUSE.

On Saturday morning last a portion of the 7th Virginia Cavalry, Robertson's brigade, under Col. W. E. Jones, engaged the 1st Michigan, 5th New York, and 1st Vermont Cavalry, at Orange Court House. Our men fought with desperation, not having more than 100 at any one time in the fight, while the enemy's force was between 1,200 and 1,500. Ten of the enemy, including a major, and eleven horses, were killed, the dead bodies of the latter remaining in the streets of Orange Court House after the fight was over. Four carriages were pressed by the Yankees to carry off their wounded. Several prisoners were captured, six of whom (Sergeant J. S. Trowbridge and two privates of the 5th New York, and two privates of the 1st Vermont,) were brought to Richmond by the Central train last evening and committed to the military prison. Some few of our men were captured in the skirmish, but none killed. Major Berry, of the 4th Georgia Battalion, who was near the scene of action, informs us that the enemy retreated by way of Terrill's Ford across the Rapidan river. Our troops occupied the town on Saturday night.

Conflicting reports of this affair were in circulation yesterday, but the foregoing statement is derived from a source entitled to full confidence, and may be relied on as correct.

We understand that our pickets were driven in previous to the fight, and that one man was killed. This may have given rise to the report that our men were forced to retire before overwhelming numbers, and that the enemy took possession of Orange Court House. The impression prevails that a general engagement cannot be long delayed.

FROM LOUDOUN AND FAIRFAX.

The latest information we have from those counties represents that the Yankees are literally carrying out the recent outrageous orders of General Pope, and that the citizens are being regularly plundered of negroes, stock, and household effects. In many instances families have been deprived of every article of comfort, and of everything in the way of provisions and supplies. All negroes who have heretofore refused to desert their owners voluntarily are now being forced to leave, whether willing or unwilling. Some time since they visited the farm of Mr. Charles F. Berkeley, and compelled one of his negro boys to accompany them to the Federal camp, against his earnest declarations that he desired to remain in the service of his master. Complaint having been made to Gen. Abercrombie, the boy was immediately returned. The notorious Geary, hearing of the affair, and resolute in his determination to carry out his peculiar mode of warfare in regular and systematic thieving, sent a squad of men to demand the boy, who was ordered to take a favorite mare of Mr. B., and forced to accompany those who were robbing him of his protection and support, and his master of his property.

At "Chantilly," the beautiful country seat of Tuppervill Stewart, Esq., in Fairfax county, they seized all the furniture, stock, &c., and a few days ago offered it at public auction. For the past two weeks parties have been going round to the houses of those who are engaged in the Confederate service, and assessing the household and other personal property preparatory to offering it at public sale. All such effects they designate as "deserted property," and appropriate to the use of the Federal army. Many of the citizens are endeavoring to effect their escape to avoid arrest and imprisonment, or the necessity of taking the execrable oath of allegiance.

The principal force now in Loudoun is a band of Unionists, headed by an unprincipled scamp, named Means, whose brother is a gallant soldier in the Confederate service. A short time ago this traitor and his followers arrested Messrs. Robert W. Gray and James S. Harris, of Leesburg, and carried them to Harper's Ferry, where they were imprisoned for several days, with nothing to subsist upon but crackers and water. There being no charge alleged against them, except a warm sympathy for the cause of the South, they were released by the commandant of that post, Col. Dixon H. Miles, and allowed to return to their homes. This, however, did not suit Means, and he made several subsequent attempts to arrest Mr. Harris, who succeeded in evading his vigilance and tyranny, and is now safe within our lines. A few days after his return from Harper's Ferry, Mr. Gray sent his negro man to his farm, a few miles from town, for some corn. When the negro arrived at the farm he found Means and his party in possession, and was sent back to Mr. Gray with word that he could have no more corn from that place. This traitor and his band are kept in Loudoun by the Lincoln Government to annoy and harass the people, and it is said that he has been employed to enforce the recent order of Pope in that county. On Saturday week he sent to Harper's Ferry for one hundred men, to aid him in carrying out that order.

Some three weeks ago three companies of Federal cavalry were sent to Leesburg, and their quartermaster announced their intention to remain there. They had been there but a few days when a report reached the town that the Confederate cavalry were in Snickersville, in the upper end of the county, and they left in great haste. It turned out that the cavalry at Snickersville was a company of their own.

The Rev. Mr. Nourse, who, with Gen. Rogers and others, was arrested some time ago, and afterwards exchanged, has been greatly annoyed by Means and his party, who have repeatedly threatened his arrest. Knowing the vindictive and malignant spirit by which Means was actuated, Mr. N., to avoid arrest, though once regularly exchanged, left Leesburg on Saturday week, and is now beyond the tyrant's reach.

FROM NORFOLK.

A letter from Norfolk, dated the 29th ult., says that a large number of negroes are coming into that city, having run away from their masters in the surrounding country. A good many slaves are being sent to McClellan. A gentleman who was running the blockade with some letters was caught by the Yankee pickets and carried before General Viele with his "mail." He was released after a short imprisonment on security to be a peaceable citizen.

THE YANKEES IN LOUDOUN.

[From the Richmond Enquirer, 5th.]

We have had the [illegible] of an interview with Mr. W. D. Drish and another gentleman from Leesburg, [illegible] who have just reached here, having escaped with difficulty the Yankee cavalry sent to arrest them at their houses. The Yankees were led, as usual in such expeditions in that county, by Samuel Means, an infamous tory, whose residence is in Waterford, Loudoun county. Means has been made a captain by the Federal Government, and declares that he will carry out Pope's infamous orders to the very letter. For this purpose he has called for more troops, which he will probably receive. Let our soldiers and our people remember that, by the action of our Government, Captain Means is an outlaw—not a soldier, but a robber and a murderer—and that he should be shot down as a wild beast wherever found or taken. This is the *duty* of every soldier or citizen in regard to him, and one the discharge of which will entitle the actor to the public applause.

Means sought to arrest the gentlemen, whom we have seen, for no other reason than what *he calls* "disloyalty." For this they are hunted from their homes, and compelled to flee as if they were felons from the pursuit of a pack of ruffians.

If Pope, as principal, and Means, as his tool, do not soon feel the bullet or the halter of the avenger, we fear the good people of Loudoun have a gloomy prospect at hand.

How long, oh! how long, ere we can chase the foe from our soil.

AFFAIRS AT FREDERICKSBURG.

[From the Richmond Enquirer, 5th]

News from Fredericksburg as late as to the 31st ult. states that the citizens of that town have to a man nobly resolved *not* to take Lincoln's oath of allegiance as required by Pope's order, but to submit to compulsory exile, as the alternative of refusal. All honor to so proud an example! Among the number is the venerable Judge Lomax, one of the purest men that ever lived, and now in extreme age. The venerable patriot and good man has, with many others, his trunk already packed, prepared to submit to the tyranny which can drive him from his home, but cannot put a stain upon his honor. May age deal very gently with the noble old man, and may thousands of strong arms and brave hearts avenge his foul wrongs!

HOME AS FOUND.

A poor fellow who was among the captured at Fort Donelson, having made his escape and reached his home near this city, a few days ago, found that during his absence, two brothers had been killed in the battles before Richmond, his mother, long in bad health, had gone to her last home, and the little estate, formerly their chief source of support, had been desolated by the presence of the invader.

MORE SPOILS.

[From the Richmond Enquirer, August 5.]

Mr. H. T. Douglas, who has been employed by the Government to gather up spoils left by the enemy, in their late strategic movement in search of a new base, showed us yesterday about forty pontoon boats which have been recovered, together with the timbers, planking, anchors, ropes, &c., in all enough to make a pontoon bridge of eight hundred to a thousand feet.

YANKEE OUTRAGES IN NANSEMOND AND ISLE OF WIGHT.

[From the Richmond Enquirer, Aug. 5.]

A gentleman, who has just arrived in Petersburg, informs the *Express* that the Yankees are roaming the counties of Nansemond and Isle of Wight, stealing negroes, bacon, and horses, and arresting every citizen whose loyalty to the Confederate States is known.

The following gentlemen have been arrested, some of them manacled, and dragged off to the Rip Raps: James Dillard, E. Bev. Hunter, James M. Holland, Wm Lawrence, Alexander, Ashburn, Robert B. Pinner, Addison Ashburn, Capt Charles Holland, J. Y. Council, M. Norfleet, Joseph Y. Council, Charles Sumner, and David P. Wright. The two latter were placed in irons, and marched off under a file of Dutch Yankees from Pennsylvania.

Mr. Sumner is charged with the *murder* of a notorious free negro, named David Sawyer, under the following circumstances:

The Yankees have employed for some time past a lot of free negroes who scout the country, tamper with slaves, and use every means to entice them from their owners. A few days since upon going into his field, Mr. Sumner discovered several of his slaves in conversation with Sawyer, which greatly enraged him. He ordered his negroes to return to their work, and told Sawyer that he should not speak to his slaves under any pretext whatever. Sawyer replied that he had not spoken to them. Mr. Sumner insisted that he had, and told him that he had seen him talking to them, whereupon Sawyer called Mr. S. "a d—d liar," at the same time drawing a huge bowie-knife, and advancing towards him. Mr. Sumner immediately seized a fence-rail, and commenced backing, while Sawyer advanced and brandished his knife in a most threatening manner. With the rail, Mr. Sumner succeeded in keeping the villain back until a corner of the fence had been reached, where his gun lay. He then quickly seized the weapon, which Sawyer no sooner saw than he started to run. Mr. Sumner fired, the load taking effect in the negro's back, and literally cutting him to pieces. The negro died next day in great agony, and Mr. Sumner's arrest was effected a few hours subsequently.

From Mr. Dillard, the Yankees stole some eight or ten thousand pounds of bacon and lard, and then carried him to the Rip Raps because he refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Lincoln Government. Messrs. Ashburn and Pinner were arrested upon the charge of having purchased bacon for the Confederate Government.

The Rev. Putnam Owen, of the Baptist Church, was arrested last Sunday at Windsor, Isle of Wight, and Alexander Ashburn, postmaster at Windsor, and Robert R. Pinner, assistant postmaster, were arrested at the same time.

In many instances the Lincoln thieves have swept everything from the premises they visited, not leaving the females and children of the family a pound of meat or a single horse.

A perfect reign of terror prevails in some portions of Nansemond and Isle of Wight counties, and the people are leaving their homes by night, and secreting themselves in the forest during the day, so that they may escape the clutches of the invaders, and reach, if possible, the Confederate lines, which do not extend beyond Blackwater.

ESCAPE OF YANKEE PRISONERS.

[From the Richmond Dispatch.]

We learn that by some unexplained negligence of the guard, five of the Yankee officers confined in the officer's prison, Eighteenth street, between Main and Cary streets, have escaped—two on Friday night, and three on Saturday night or yesterday morning. Their names and rank are: W. B. Hatch, lieutenant colonel; William Biddle, second lieutenant; G. M. Oakley, captain; F. A. Murphey, second lieutenant; and H. B. Marsters, first lieutenant.

How the prisoners escaped is a mystery as much to the guard as to the public, but it is enough to know that they are *non est*. Yesterday the provost marshal detailed a number of detectives to follow and ferret them out, but nothing had been heard of them.

We know nothing of the guard about the prison, who, on consecutive nights, allowed prisoners to escape in their face; but that they must have either been asleep or treacherous is too palpable to admit of dispute.

Yesterday two women, named Miss Mucher and Miss Catherine McCort, were arrested by the assistant provost marshal's guard, on a charge of being in complicity with the escaping Yankees. Others were suspected, but have not yet been arrested.

With regard to the above affair, the *Examiner* further says:

Four men and seven women were, on yesterday, arrested and examined by the provost marshal, and the following were remanded for further examination, charged with aiding and abetting the escape: Mrs. Louisa Webber, Miss Lucy Wasgatt, Wm. Frank (proprietor of the Mechanicsville turnpike Tavern), Seely Wigton, and Lewis Webber, residents of Seventeenth street.

SUBSTITUTES IN THE REBEL ARMY—ORDER FROM THE WAR DEPARTMENT.

RICHMOND, August 2, 1862.

To the Editors of the Enquirer:

Gentlemen: Having been frequently called upon by persons wishing to employ substitutes for the army, and my opinion asked as to whether the captains of companies or the colonels of regiments possessed the power to reject all substitutes, and not wishing to give opinions upon subjects with which I am not familiar, I submitted the question to the Secretary of War, and received from him the following, which, he having consented thereto, I desire you to publish. It gives the general rule on the subject.

Very truly yours,
R. L. MONTAGUE.

"One substitute per month is allowed in each company. The substitute must not be liable to conscription, and must be physically and morally fit to be a soldier. In deciding the question of fitness, the colonel has the right to overrule the captain, but in such case, if he rejects the substitute, should report his reasons to the department in order that their sufficiency may be determined. He should confine himself to objections to the substitute, and not, as some do, state objections to the policy of substitution.
GEO. W. RANDOLPH,
Secretary of War."

SPOILS FROM THE BATTLE-FIELD.

[From the Richmond Dispatch, Aug. 6.]

The officers attached to the assistant provost marshal's office, during the month of July, captured property stolen from the battle-fields of value to the amount of six thousand seven hundred and seventy-three dollars and ninety-seven cents, ($6,773.97.)

The articles consisted of overcoats, cartridge boxes, blankets, mining and entrenching tools, oil cloths, muskets, rifles, pistols, saddles, holsters, bridles, knapsacks, bayonets, knives, &c.

BELLE ISLAND PRISON DEPOT.

[From the Richmond Examiner.]

Belle Island, in the James river, heretofore little known and without any historic interest, is destined to figure hereafter more conspicuously as the depot for the confinement of the several thousand Yankee prisoners taken in the late battles before Richmond, and confined for some time afterwards in the Libby and other prisons of the city, but within the last four weeks removed to the island. The island is about one mile in length and a quarter of a mile in breadth, with two branches in the river that form, clasping the shores on either side.

On a level portion, near the landing, is located the camp of the prisoners, containing between 400 and 500 tents, closely huddled together, with a broad avenue running through the centre, which has been named Broadway, after the famous New York thoroughfare. This Yankee settlement now numbers upwards of 4,500 inhabitants, and in the evening, when their promenade commences, Broadway on Belle Island rivals Broadway in New York, certainly in the grotesqueness of costume.

The encampment of the guard is located on a hill overlooking the Yankee encampment. The guard numbers about three hundred men, including Day's light artillery battery, Captain Norris Montgomery, who superintends the whole police arrangement. Captain Montgomery and his officers have their headquarters in a school-house in the hollow, near the Yankee settlement. A railing surrounds the camp, and beyond its confines none of the prisoners are allowed to intrude except under guard. A bathing spot has been selected under the trees in the river, and the prisoners are conducted out in squads of ten, and enjoy a bath of a few minutes, which they seem to enjoy very much. The whole day is occupied in this manner until the whole four thousand odd hundreds have made their ablutions. The health of the prisoners has improved to a remarkable degree under the influence of the water and fresh air of the island.

Only fifteen deaths have occurred since the island was occupied. Inside of the camp enclosure of the Yankees they are allowed to exercise any form of municipal government they please. Many of them display the usual amount of Yankee ingenuity in the arrangement of their domestic quarters. Wells have been sunk in various parts of the camp, from whence excellent water is obtained.

But while this people exercise their ingenuity and skill, we are sorry to state that they are practising among themselves the vices which distinguished them while enjoying the opportunities at large in Virginia. They are the most inveterate thieves, and on every opportunity depredate upon one another. For one to take off his shoes, or a piece of his garment, and fail to sleep, is to invite a theft from his comrade, and every day complaints are made to the commanding officer of the guard of such depredators.

Numbers have lost their shoes and pieces of their clothing, and go about barefooted, or in their stocking feet, and half naked.

One of their own sutlers, captured with the prisoners has established a sutlership, and the prisoners make purchases from him of such articles as are not furnished in the daily rations. They loudly complain of his extortion, however, and threaten to have him sent to the Rip Raps when they get back. Their funds are running short, too, and many are compelled to part with whatever they have saleable about them.

They are all looking hopefully forward to an exchange, and are very persistent in their inquiries concerning the prospect. A few nights since five of the prisoners attempted to escape by swimming the river. One of them succeeded in getting nearly across, but all were captured, and are now kept under guard.

Everything about the island suggests cleanliness, comfort, and strict discipline.

The island is accessible by boat from the landing below the Tredegar Iron Works.

CONFISCATION.

The entire property of Wm. Norfleet, Esq., of Nansemond county, valued at $100,000, has been confiscated by the Yankee dynasty. Other prominent citizens of the same county are hourly expecting to be robbed in a similar manner.

A CANDIDATE FOR THE BENCH.

The Texas *Republican* contains a card from Wm. W. Wallace, formerly a prominent attorney in Warrenton, Va, announcing himself a candidate for the office of Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Texas. We observe that he has four competitors.

DEATH OF AN EMINENT DIVINE.

We regret to learn that the Rev. J. H. Thornwell, D. C., on Friday last, [illegible] monia.

YANKEE PRISONERS LEAVING AFOOT.

Three thousand Yankee prisoners leave to-day, on foot, for Verina, twelve miles below Richmond, to be exchanged.

ADDRESS OF GENERAL HILL.

Gen. D. H. Hill, of North Carolina, having been assigned to the command of the Confederate forces in the territory extending from Drury's Bluff to Wilmington, N. C., issued the following address to his late division on taking his departure:

HEADQUARTERS OF DIVISION, July 21, 1862.

GENERAL ORDERS No. —.

In pursuance of orders from the headquarters of the army, the undersigned relinquishes the present command, to enter upon a new field of duty. It is with unfeigned pain and reluctance he leaves a division which, in the last two months, has poured out more blood in the sacred cause of the South than any division in the army—which, alone and unsupported, drove the enemy from his abattis, fortifications, and rifle pits at Seven Pines, capturing eight guns, the camp and stores of the enemy, and which, at Mechanicsville, Coal Harbor, White Oak River, and Malvern Hill exhibited all those high and heroic qualities for which the Southern soldier is so remarkable.

May you ever maintain your present proud position; may you ever rebuke with scorn the wretches who desert your colors in battle or straggle from your ranks on the march and in the camps; may your future deeds be such that when your name is mentioned it may send a thrill of joy through the heart of him who once had the honor of commanding you.

By order of D. H. Hill, Major General,
J. W. TAYLOR, A. A. A. G.

ORDERS TO REPORT.

We understand that orders have been issued for all paroled prisoners taken at Roanoke Island and elsewhere to report their names, so that they may be included in the exchange lately agreed on between the Confederate and Lincoln Governments.—*Richmond Dispatch*, 5th.

From the Valley.

[From the Richmond Dispatch, 5th.]

THE RAPPAHANNOCK LINES.

There is no material change in affairs along the lines of the Rappahannock since our last report. Our latest information tends to confirm the impression that a heavy engagement is impending, and must occur in a few days at most. The movements of the contending armies indicate that the blow must soon be struck.

The train, yesterday afternoon, brought down four prisoners from Gordonsville, captured in the cavalry fight at Orange Court House on Saturday. Two of these are members of the 2d Vermont, and the other two of the 5th New York regiments of cavalry. From the statements of these prisoners, it would appear that the fight of Saturday was much more severe than previous accounts represent it. They state that seventeen of their men were killed and a number wounded. Lieut. Myers, of the Provost Guard, under whose charge they were brought to this city, informs us that our loss was one killed and eleven wounded. The prisoners report their force in the fight at about seven hundred, and ours three hundred to four hundred. Notwithstanding this disparity of numbers, the enemy were driven from the town, and the place was occupied by our men.

Passengers who arrived in the city, from Staunton, yesterday afternoon, state that the road from that town to Winchester is unobstructed, and the Yankees, though occupying the heights north of Winchester, have no pickets on the Valley turnpike. A number of the citizens of Frederick and Clark had left their homes in consequence of the order of General Pope requiring them to take the oath, and were daily arriving at Staunton and other points in the upper Valley.

On Thursday last there was considerable excitement at New Market in consequence of the rumored advance of the enemy on that town by way of the Luray road. On the afternoon of that day they took possession of Pewick's Fort, some ten miles southeast of New Market, and it was seriously apprehended that they would extend their advance into the Shenandoah Valley. Having already suffered severely from the presence and robbery of the invaders, the people of the Shenandoah and Rockingham justly dread their return. It is hoped that active operations will give them employment in some other quarter before they have an opportunity of again marauding upon that rich section.

A SKIRMISH IN PRINCE GEORGE.

[From the Richmond Enquirer 5th.]

A portion of the 13th Virginia Cavalry, about fifty strong, commanded by Capt. McIlwaine, engaged about eighty Federal cavalry, near Cox's Mill, in Prince George county, on Sunday forenoon, at 11 o'clock. Capt. McIlwaine divided his command, stationing one half on a hill in his rear, and proceeding with the rest to a creek below. Here they met the whole force of the enemy, and, unfortunately, their carbines refused to fire, on account of the dampness of the powder. They resisted the assault gallantly with their sabres, but were at length forced to retire. Singular to say, the twenty-five men stationed on the hill, instead of coming to the assistance of their comrades, retreated, without either a shot or the show of a fight. The casualties to the Confederates were: In Company B (Capt McIlwaine), James Phillips, killed; Craig Biddle, wounded in the left arm; Thomas Gilliam, in the thigh; ——— Thompson, in the shoulder. Company C, one missing. Company D, one missing. Company L, all safe.

The *Examiner's* account adds:

During the fight a railroad train, which was on the point of leaving for Gordonsville when the Yankees appeared, made its escape. The Yankees did not pursue, but employed themselves for two hours tearing up the railroad track and breaking into the stores in the village. They then returned to the north side of the Rapidan, having stopped long enough at Mr. Thomas Scott's, one mile beyond the court house, to bury ten of their men who had been killed in the fight, and to pillage the country for a mile or two around. After they had all disappeared, a heavy force of our cavalry, with several pieces of artillery, appeared and made pursuit. They went as far as the ford over the Rapidan, and, seeing no enemy, returned.

We learn that Orange Court House remains in our possession, with a force sufficient to protect it against any similar raid in future. The nine prisoners taken in the fight arrived here yesterday evening in the Central cars.

THE CAVALRY EXPLOIT IN NICHOLAS COUNTY.

[From the Richmond Dispatch, August 4.]

The daring attack of Major Bailey, with a small squadron of cavalry, upon the garrison at Summersville, Nicholas county, was made in the morning at daylight, after our troops had traversed a long distance over the most rugged portion of our mountain country, and fully one hundred miles within the enemy's lines. The Federals were taken by surprise, but fought well for about two hours, when they displayed a white flag, laid down their arms, and surrendered unconditionally. Their loss in killed was eight, wounded twenty-five, and prisoners sixty-two. Of Major Bailey's command, not a man was killed, and only three slightly wounded. Ordnance and commissary stores were found in great abundance, all of which were placed in wagons and safely brought back to the Salt Sulphur Springs. The notorious Dr. Wm. H. Rucker, who holds a lieutenant colonel's commission in the Yankee army, is reported to have committed excesses, such as shooting prisoners in cold blood, burning bridges, &c., such as will entitle him to more severe treatment than is usually accorded to prisoners of war. On his arrival at the Salt Sulphur, Gen. Loring had him placed in irons, and then despatched a messenger to Alleghany county for evidence of his former crimes. His trial was to have taken place last week.

Editorials from the Rebel Papers.

THE RETALIATORY ORDER.

[From the Richmond Enquirer, 6th.]

The orders which our Government has issued in response to those which have appeared from the Federal Secretary of War and from General Pope, have been received with an almost universal satisfaction. The absolute necessity of meeting Federal violence by measures of retaliation was apparent to all. The only problem was so to meet it as to keep ourselves in the right and our enemies wholly in the wrong. From the first knowledge received here of the recent courses of the enemy, which was on the 26th of July, the President and his Cabinet have diligently considered the question in all its aspects. Their decision is one which may not gratify the unreflecting passions of extreme men, but it will command the applause of history, and will justify us in the opinion of the impartial world.

If, without an effort at repression, we had at once rushed to the very extremity of bloody retaliation, we should have manifested a readiness, which would have looked like a desire, to see the war assume a character justly abhorred among civilized nations. It was due to ourselves, it was demanded by a decent respect for the opinions of the world, to give to our first action the character of a warning as well as of retribution. A fierce violence might fan the mere passions of war; but a wise moderation will not only commend us to the sympathies and approbation of other communities and nations, but will best satisfy our own citizens and soldiers. These will feel an additional pleasure and security with every evidence that the honor and dignity of the Confederacy are in safe hands, and that our counsels are guided by judgment cool and clear. The soldier will fight with a better spirit when he feels assured that what was at first the best of causes, has not been injured or stained through the fault of his Government, but is as honorable, and pure, and worthy of his life's blood as ever.

The visiting of the retaliation on the commissioned officers of Pope's army addresses the sentiment of strict justice without exciting those regrets which exist when one man suffers for the fault of another. The officers share in the crime, for they can resign if they choose. The President, however, distinctly intimates that if this measure of retaliation fail of speedily securing the desired end, he will include the whole of Pope's army under the ban of outlawry. The anticipation of this will operate in advance upon the privates of the Yankee army, who will realize how frail the tenure of their immunity, and that it depends both upon their own decent conduct and a proper course on the part of their President.

GENERAL POPE'S ORDERS.

The war has, in fact, on the part of the North, been one of plunder from the beginning. The published orders of Pope only contain an avowal of what has been disavowed, but practised, by the Yankees throughout the war. At the beginning, some of their generals, obeying the better instincts of natures not altogether brutalized by the service in which they are enlisted, commenced their campaigns in the South with a resolution to conduct them on civilized principles; but they soon gave up these good intentions under the pressure of opinion from the North, or to invigorate their operations by gratifying the passions of their soldiers.

On the part of the political organization which wields the powers of the Northern Government, the war is kept up for its fat contracts and its hundreds of millions of patronage. In the very nature of things it were impossible to maintain such a war by observing the mild and restraining precepts of modern civilization in its prosecution. The soldiery of a corrupt Government must themselves be corrupt. It has become as necessary to bribe them to zeal and activity in conducting military operations as it was to subsidize the Northern people to the support of the war by lavish dispensations of patronage.

Thus the war has at length assumed, both at home and in the field, its true character. It is a war of wholesale plunder, public and private. The community at home are to be taxed to support the immense expenditures requisite to the payment of countless military salaries and infinite army contracts; and the invaded South is to be plundered at will by the Yankee soldiery for the double purpose of enticing additional recruits into the service and of gratifying, in the most acceptable manner, the ruling passion of those already enlisted.

A WAR OF PLUNDER AND RAPINE—POPE PRONOUNCED "A CRAVEN WRETCH."

[From the Richmond Examiner.]

The North is now avowedly embarked in a war of plunder, rapine, and oppression, without shame and without compunction. In their eager desire for booty they are blinded to all the heroic features of the contest presented in the attitude of their adversaries. The bravery of our men, attested on every battle-field, makes no impression upon their besotted natures; it is, in their eyes, but the desperation of rebels escaping death from the halter. The heroism of our women fails to excite any expressions of chivalric appreciation. If they defy the invader by their conduct and manners, their conduct is denounced as the forwardness of prostitutes, and they are threatened with the treatment usually accorded to such characters. In a war thus waged it is natural that the most infamous characters should attain to the highest posts of command. Butler, who has succeeded in winning a reputation for infamy, at home and in distant lands, greater than attaches to any man who has yet disgraced the living generation, is in command at New Orleans; and the new invasion of Virginia is entrusted to Pope, a person who, even in the early years of his manhood, was publicly and ignominiously horsewhipped for brutality to a woman. It is this craven wretch, bearing the scars of the lash upon his back, who comes boasting to have seen only the backs of rebels.

In his eagerness for plunder, it is a fact that the Yankee invader obstinately refuses to acknowledge the claims of Union citizens to exemption from his rapacity. On the contrary, the plunder of this class of wretches is pursued with peculiar avidity, from the fact that they possess the greatest amount of booty. In general, the Union man repudiates the cause of the South for the sake of preserving his worldly goods. His better impulses are patriotic, and incline him to the cause of the South; but avarice proves too strong for patriotism, and he espouses the Federal side to save his property. He is like the young man in Scripture who was commanded to sell all that he had and to follow his Saviour, but who went away grieved because he had great possessions. This unhappy class of people, who sell soul, conscience, and country for property are ruthlessly stripped of *this* last by the very hands whose protection they thought to [illegible] The fate of the [illegible] striking proof of the rapacious temper and mercenary motives with which the North is conducting this war. If there is a class deserving the esteem of that people and the protection of its "Union-saving" armies, it is certainly those faithful men at the South who, in what they declare to be hotbeds of rebellion, still remain loyal to the Union cause. But these people happen to be rich in the booty which it is the object of their soldiery to seize, and, with shameless disregard of every principle of good faith, and of every profession in which they are waging the war, they are made the first and the chief victims of rapacity and outrage.

M'CLELLAN IN EUROPE.

[From the Richmond Dispatch, 5th.]

McClellan seems to be in a fair way to become the laughing stock of the world. *It is surprising* to see how exactly the English newspapers have taken the measure of his foot, although in England they receive none but Yankee journals. The "strategic movement" which doubled the right wing up on his left, and sent the whole, helter-skelter, upon James river, thirty-five miles from its original base, furnishes the London journals with an inexhaustible fund of raillery. The Confederates, the *Post* says, must bear their reverses with astonishing philosophy, since they illuminated their capital upon receipt of the intelligence. On the other hand, the Federals gave no such token of exultation over their victory. The gloom which pervaded Washington and New York it considers a very singular mode of celebrating a great triumph. It has a hit at McClellan's mode of "changing his base," or, in other words, of conducting his retreat, and says he does not deserve the praise bestowed by Napoleon upon one of his generals—that he "surpassed all others in organizing and conducting a retreat." "However," says the *Post*, "whether predetermined or not, the recent movement has left General McClellan and his army many miles farther distant from Richmond, on the banks of the James river, with a friendly flotilla of gunboats in his rear, ready to shell the Confederates should they attempt to force him once more to put in practice his novel principles of strategy."

The *Times* makes itself merry with poor Mac's "bayonet charges upon paper," says that "the facts of his great strategic victory are fast oozing out," and asserts that "even the American Government cannot destroy truth forever." It gives McClellan great credit for the skill with which he contrived to "tone down" his defeat; but says it must now be plain to the dullest capacity that he was so badly beaten that he would have been driven into the river had he not been protected by his gunboats. "It is rapidly coming to this," says the *Times*, "that the greater the victory announced, the more terrible will be the defeat believed in, and the President and his War Ministers may succeed in so mystifying the public mind that if they really *should* gain a great victory, the announcement of it will put New York into mourning, and ruin all the speculators for a rise in Government stocks."

The severest hit, however, is given by the *Globe*, which says that after seven days' severe fighting and terrible loss, McClellan has achieved the great "strategic movement" of establishing himself in a position which he might have reached, without fighting, by land or water, any time before the 27th of June.

From these and other comments of the English press, McClellan and Lincoln might learn a great truth, which they seem thus far quite unable to comprehend. Candor is always best, in all conceivable cases. They have nothing so much at heart as to deceive the English people, except to deceive the Yankee nation. In order to reach this much-coveted end, they have lied until the English people have ceased to place the least confidence in anything they say, and, even the Yankee nation is far from considering their reports of equal authority with the Gospel. They had best try the truth, for a short time, by way of a change. To tell a lie, which nobody believes, is to sell one's soul to the devil for irredeemable shinplasters.

FAULT-FINDING.

[From the Charleston Mercury.]

A minority of seven dissented from the majority of the Border State Representatives in the Congress of the United States in their opposition to President Lincoln's scheme of emancipation. They made a report, in which they state that "they could not reconcile it to their *sense of duty*, in this *trying hour*, to respond to a spirit *of fault-finding*," and believing that his Excellency *meant everything for the best*, they could not resist his appeal, and, therefore, will support his policy of emancipation.

These Abolition toadies in Washington have their counterpart all over the Confederate States. If the Government goes to sleep amidst the din and clamor of our enemy's preparation to assail us; if it employs inefficient agents, and persists in keeping them in place after their inefficiency has been proved; if it refuses to employ, or employs with reluctance, ability in the public service, after the clearest demonstration of its existence; if personal considerations, and not the public good, control appointments to office; if it puts in jeopardy the cause of the Confederate States itself, which gives our enemies the greatest power to harass and injure us; if in three great battles we have vanquished the enemy, and for want of generalship have failed in reaping the fruit thereof, in the achievement of independence and peace—no remonstrance or exposure must be made. If they are, it is an exhibition "of a spirit of fault-finding!" It is croaking! It is aiding the enemy! His Excellency "meant everything for the best," and, therefore, they support his policy.

Some old divine has said that "hell is paved with good intentions." It is no excuse for a lost battle that the general really wished to win it; nor in the conduct of State affairs, affecting the liberties and existence of a people, can good intentions be accepted as a substitute for wisdom and energy. To find fault where fault exists is the duty of the public press, and of all public men. There is not the least danger that too much fault will be found. The danger is the other way. Fault will not be found where it ought to be exposed, because it does not pay. Patronage and Government favors and offices do not attend on fault-finders. They are usually proscribed by Governments. The sort of people they usually love and foster are your supporters through thick and thin—your flatterers and toadies—your patriotic and indignant defenders of attacks upon the Government—your adorers of Executive wisdom and infallibility—your poetic inventors of God-like attributes to dress up power—these are the people who, by their falsehoods and servility, intensify tyrannies and break down republics. They abound under all governments; and they abound in the Confederate States. The natural inclination of all men, especially in times of trouble, is to support the Government. Where your life, liberty, and property are bound up in the conduct of any man, you will be very loath to believe that he is incompetent to protect them. Your volitions will influence your belief, and nothing but the strongest proof will shake your confidence. A mere fault-finder will have little chance of being listened to. The danger is that you will be ruined by your false confidence rather than by your false suspicions. The true course is to hear everything—weigh everything—watch everything, and despise official hirelings and sycophants. By these means you will be very apt to know the truth.

CHANDLER AND HIS PARALLELS.

[From the Richmond Enquirer, 4th.]

In reading the speech of Senator Chandler, of Michigan, which we lately laid before our readers, we were struck with the proof it afforded that the professional fault-finder is the same everywhere—dogmatical and denunciatory to the last degree, even where most ignorant. Chandler belongs to a faction in the North that claims all the wisdom, but yet has not been able to obtain the rule, for neither the people nor the authorities give credit to their very modest pretension. Soured and chagrined in consequence, they employ themselves in assailing and traducing all who refuse to accept their dictation, or to promote, it may be, their personal ambition.

We have no belief in the infallibility or the perfect wisdom of any one; and, therefore, none in that of commanding officers. But we have infinitely less in that of parlor, or newspaper, or Senate-chamber generals. We believe that a commanding officer, who is an honest man and patriot, of good natural capacity and military experience, who knows the strength and position of his own men, and the strength and position of his confronting enemy, and who is withal ambitious of fame, is far better to be trusted with making the proper movements than an ignorant critic, however self-conceited he may be, and however confidently he may charge others with gross stupidity.

The speech of Chandler, to which we have referred, will sustain these remarks. It is a violent attack upon McClellan for his alleged errors and omissions. It denounces him because he did not, after the great Federal victory at Williamsburg, (!) march right on to Richmond; for, says Chandler, "When that battle was fought and won, all the enemy's works were cleared away, and we had *an open road to Richmond.* * * *All we had to do* was to get through those infernal swamps, march up and *take possession of Richmond.*" Indeed! Of course it was a terrible blunder in McClellan to lose this perfect opportunity to reap the end of all his labors; and Chandler abuses him in good style for failing to embrace it.

Chandler next denounces McClellan with becoming indignation for not availing himself of an equally perfect opportunity after his "victory" of Seven Pines! Says this Senate-chamber general: "The enemy went back to Richmond pell mell. I have been informed, by a man who was there at the time, that two brigades of fresh troops could have chased *the whole Confederate army through the city of Richmond and into the James river*, so utter was their rout and confusion."

Senator Chandler is a man whose opinion ought to be entitled to respect. He is one of the representatives of the great State of Michigan in the Federal Senate—a position which can always command the willing services of the best minds and best men of a Commonwealth. And on matters connected with the war he seemed entitled to much consideration, for he is one of the war committee, and has access to every source of information. Yet this man, speaking in character of Senator, and on the Senate floor, under such responsibilities and with such means of information, makes allegations and criticisms as to McClellan which every Confederate soldier, and every citizen in this whole region, knows to be false, and, indeed, ridiculously absurd.

Behold in Chandler a fair specimen of an amateur general, such as from parlors, or newspaper offices, or platforms, or forums, enlighten the people, and castigate faithless and stupid officers! We have such in the South. Their croakings are suspended in seasons of victory, for then the public will not bear them; but they are speedily renewed again. A paper of the class of complainers, which now lies before us, from a Southern city, is already assailing "the want of proper generalship," which, as at Manassas and Corinth, so now at Richmond, has lost us the independence and peace which each of those victories ought to have secured. It says that a "prompt and immediate advance on Washington" would have ended the war, and adds:

"It is a grievous pity that our troops have never had a general to command them with skill and energy enough to make their victories decisive of any result beyond a mere temporary repulse. The inefficiency of our generals renders another hecatomb of martyrs necessary to the establishment of our liberties and independence."

This is a specimen fit to stand beside Chandler's, for it is of the same sort. The instant march from "Williamsburg" and "Seven Pines" right into Richmond, is akin to the "prompt and immediate advance on Washington," regardless of fact and possibilities.

There is no reason to doubt that our generals and our Government are as anxious to profit by victories, and to win advantages, and to close the war, as any of those who deplore their incapacity, and kindly tell them what they ought to do; and they certainly understand much better the obstacles to be overcome, and the means in hand. We have no doubt that General Lee would commit as many and as fatal blunders if he were to obey his self-constituted mentors, as McClellan would have done had Chandler been his driver. He will of course be denounced as weak and incompetent and grossly stupid; but he will scarcely allow this to disturb his equanimity.

Since the losses and the fatigues and the fastings of the terrible week of fighting around Richmond our generals have been recruiting and collecting together their wearied and gallant soldiers, and making the proper dispositions of them for future operations. The evidences of the zeal and energy with which this has been accomplished have been patent. It would have been very desirable, indeed, if we had had a force large enough and fresh enough to have not only watched McClellan, but to have marched "immediately" on Washington and Baltimore, and Philadelphia and New York, and especially Boston. But generals in the field labor under a great disadvantage as compared with theorizers in the newspapers and the parlors—they are compelled to be *practical*. They have to be content to do *the best they can*.

Startling News from Hilton Head.

A Monster Ram Completed at Savannah—Two More at Charleston—Description of the Ram Fingal—Our Land Forces Imperilled—Preparations to Receive the Ram—The Defences Being Strengthened and Ordnance Stores Issued—A Council of War—Unreliable Contrabands—Debut of the Fingal—Rebels Concentrating at Bluffton.

ON BOARD THE VERMONT,
PORT ROYAL HARBOR, S. C., Saturday, Aug. 2, 1862.

Despite the lessons given us by the Rollins Turtle, the Merrimac, and the Arkansas, our fleet, as I write, lies comparatively at the mercy of the monster ram which the rebels of Savannah have just completed, and placed under command of the renegade, J. Pembroke Jones, formerly of the United States navy, and more lately chief executive officer of the exploded Merrimac.

Frequent interviews have been had during the past week between Commodore Dupont and Major General Hunter, their object being, it is supposed, to concert a thorough system of co-operative defence between the land and naval forces in the event of the expected attack. We have reliable information that the two rams in Charleston harbor are nearly, if not quite, ready for service, and will be used mainly to protect the harbor, and convoy vessels out and in through the blockading fleet. They are small, however, though formidable, and can hardly be used to [illegible] with safety at any great distance from [illegible] ment on the Monitor, [illegible] are cased with railroad iron, mainly sent down from the railroads which the rebels have destroyed in their different retreats through Virginia.

It is a matter of sincere congratulation that the Crusader joined us a couple of days ago—her gallant commander, Capt. Rhind, being, of all men in the navy, the very one best suited to such desperate work as we may shortly have in these waters. The presence of the Paul Jones, with her heavy armament, is also an advantage; but it cannot be denied, and should not be concealed, that without the aid of a floating battery of the Monitor class, Flag Officer Dupont's blockading squadron is in danger of annihilation. The time has come in which we must talk plainly or perish. The navy cannot plead, if sunk or mashed up into match-timber, that it has won a "strategic victory," and that it has succeeded *in its dearest and most necessary wish* when driven, routed.

And with the destruction of the navy, should such be accomplished, the rebels will, in all human probability, be enabled to wrest back from us every foot of ground now under shelter of the Union flag in the States of South Carolina and Georgia. The small force left with General Hunter, further and largely reduced of late, in order to furnish renewed legions to fill the burial trenches and choke up the hospitals of the Virginia Peninsula, can scarcely hope, for any length of time, to successfully resist the masses of Secession troops now held in readiness on the mainland opposite Port Royal and Hilton Head Islands. If once the ram succeeds in crushing our gunboats, the Secesh will have obtained an unmolested crossing for the rafts and barges, which they are known to have been busily building of late in every creek, bayou, and estuary along the mainland shore; and then, farewell to the gallant soldiers of the department of the South!

I have talked with many of the most intelligent army officers at Hilton Head (chiefly regulars) on this subject, and all agree in regarding as hazardous in the extreme their positions at that point and at Beaufort, should our navy once lose its present absolute supremacy over the waters and waterways around those islands. What can be done, however, with mere wooden vessels or small gunboats a few of them lightly armored on the bow, against such a monster as this Savannah ram? Not a vessel here, but the Paul Jones, carries metal of sufficient weight to injure the railroad plating of such an antagonist; and the old and unwieldy storeship Vermont, on which our gallant Commodore's flag is now hoisted, would be nothing but a mere plaything for the tremendous ram to butt hither and thither, and make fun of (as a cat plays with a mouse) before sending it to the bottom.

MONDAY, Aug. 4.—The excitement produced by the expectation of the ram making her appearance is unabated, and preparations to receive her are still vigorously pushed forward by both land and naval forces. Yesterday, three contrabands came down the river from Savannah in a boat, reporting themselves perfectly familiar with the condition of a floating battery which the rebels have at Savannah in addition to the Fingal. They state that the battery is a complete failure, leaking, unseaworthy; that its engines will not work, and that the platform for the guns are so badly made that the concussion of a discharge dismounts the pieces. This information was regarded as necessary to be taken with a grain of salt, as negroes knowing so much could not have found it easy to escape, and the rebels attempted a trick of this kind, with reference to the Merrimac, for the purpose of throwing the Union forces off their guard.

Ordnance and ordnance stores are being issued in large quantities to all the forts and posts in the department, and swarms of soldiers are detailed on fatigue duty at the defences. At this post alone two full regiments of white soldiers and a portion of the 1st South Carolina Volunteers (colored) are busy completing the defences.

I have just seen the negroes whom Col. Barton sent here from Fort Pulaski for examination by Gen. Hunter. One of them, the most intelligent, informed me the battery was sheathed with railroad iron, the plates being 12 inches in thickness. She mounts ten ten-inch columbiads, four on either side, and one at either end, and a Captain Anderson commands her. The negro said he had been a waiter at the Pulaski House, and does not pretend to have worked, as was at first reported, upon the floating battery or the ram. He picked up his information from the conversation of officers and others frequenting the hotel. He is fully corroborated by the other two, both of whom have been house servants in Savannah, one of them being a slave of Major Gordon, of that city; and my impression is that they are honest in what they have stated. They report the soldiers as living on quarter rations, with the exception of corn meal, which is said to be abundant.

[From another Correspondent.]

HILTON HEAD, S. C. Aug. 2.—For several days we have noticed a growing boldness on the rebel side. We have seen them defiantly coming down the Savannah river, replacing the buoys, taking soundings, and making most careful and minute observations. Through the strong glasses of the signal station at Fort Pulaski we have watched the crews of the blockaded ships as they bent their sails at the city wharves, and have noticed the unusual activity with which flatboats were multiplied and lighters have increased. Word has come to us, too, of the condition of the naval monster, and the fact that it was to be used against us at an early day has not been unknown.

The new rebel vessel has been constructed from the British steamer Fingal, which, you will recollect, ran into Savannah early in the spring with a cargo of Enfield rifles, Blakely cannon, gray uniform cloth, and salt. The Fingal was then a new and staunch craft, just out of the shipyard at Glasgow; and it was understood at the time that she had been purchased by parties in Savannah, ultimately to become a portion of the Confederate navy. The Secessionists at once commenced the work of transforming her into an impregnable iron-clad—their object at that time being, apparently, the preservation of Pulaski; and long before the fall of that stronghold an exact picture of her, roofed like the Merrimac, was prepared by the commander of the sloop-of-war Dale, and forwarded by Gen. Hunter to the authorities at Washington.

The armament of the Fingal is as follows:

Two 100-pound rifled guns; four 50-pound rifled guns; six 10-inch columbiads; two 24-pounders for grape and canister—all fourteen heavy pieces. In shape she is similar to the Merrimac, differing from the latter, however, in her draught of water, which is much less than that of her ill-fated predecessor. She is heavily armored, and her portholes are protected by heavy wrought iron lids, so arranged as to close at the recoil of every gun. She has a massive beak at either end, and is, moreover, provided with a scalding apparatus, with which to repel any attempt to board her. Her commander is J. Pembroke Jones, formerly of the United States navy.

Day before yesterday she first came under the fire of Pulaski. She was feeling her way, apparently unmindful of the shot from our heaviest guns. Of course the intelligence was not long in reaching Hilton Head. From that moment, such preparations as we have been able to make for a proper reception have been in progress. The heaviest of our transport steamers have been placed under the orders of Admiral Dupont. Gunboats have been stationed at each approach, and new signal lines have placed them in instant communication with headquarters. We shall know when the ram passes Pulaski, what direction she takes, and what her evident purpose is, long before we see her.

Meanwhile the rebels are concentrating at Bluffton, at Hardeesville, and at Grahamsville. It is apparently their plan first to destroy our fleet, and then to move the Fingal around to Seabrook, and there cover the landing of their forces.

How the Admiral proposes to meet the Fingal it is not proper for me to reveal. It is sufficient for me to state that he believes at once in the impregnable nature of the craft, and in the reckless daring of her commander. Whether—in the event of her advent—he will remain on board the rudderless, helpless old Vermont, which at present is his flagship, or betake himself to some one of the steamers in port, I do not know.

The prospect of an encounter with the land forces, which may operate against us at Seabrook and other points on the western portion of the island, gives us no uneasiness. Our fortifications, always strong, have been materially strengthened within the past three days, and large fatigue parties are constantly toiling at them. The supply of forage at the fort was exhausted some days since, and, as a consequence, the heavy labor of hauling ordnance and mounting cannon has to be performed entirely by the men. This, however, is cheerfully submitted to on their part, as the prospect of meeting an enemy increases. To-night every transport has its fires lighted and steam ready; all are lying on spring cables, ready to move at a moment's notice. All civilians have been placed on shore, and to each man remaining on board has been given a life preserver. The gunboat Conemaugh, one of the new "double enders," lies quietly down the channel. Lanterns are swinging from the signal station, and from every elevated spot anxious eyes are peering through powerful lenses down the bay. Everybody is on the rampage about the ram.

AUGUST 4.—The latest intelligence from the ram is of questionable truth. Three negroes who came direct from Savannah, report to Col. Barton, at Pulaski, that the Fingal is a failure. They profess to have been on board of her and to know all about her. They say her hull is unseaworthy, that her engines will not work, and that her guns cannot be elevated. They represent her as in every way an abortion. At the very hour these "highly intelligent" contrabands were rehearsing their narrative, the Fingal was in sight of Pulaski, under full head of steam, plying up and down the Savannah river. The negroes undoubtedly came at the bidding of their masters, and their story is beyond question intended as a decoy to allay defensive preparations on our part. These rumors have had the effect somewhat to alleviate the fever of excitement, into which we were suddenly thrown; but Admiral Dupont still awaits, and still expects the Fingal. His own information is positive and conclusive.

From Bluffton we have reports up to the evening of Saturday. Eighteen hundred rebels were at that time encamped there. Five days ago the enemy at that point were only two hundred and fifty or three hundred strong. Brigadier General Williams, who is in command of the post, has been making a thorough examination and inspection of our lines of fortifications. The work upon them is progressing rapidly and satisfactorily.

General Brannan and his staff were at the headquarters of General Hunter yesterday. The two generals were for some time in council.

A correspondent of the *Tribune* says:

Commodore Dupont has trustworthy information that the two rams being constructed in Charleston harbor are nearly finished, or quite so; and he expects that a concerted demonstration will be made by the rams of Charleston and Savannah, acting in conjunction with the powerful land forces under command of Major General G. W. Smith. General Hunter entertains no present apprehensions that he will be unable to hold his works and repel the attack of the land force; but little security can be given for the vast depots of combustible stores in the combustible storehouses of this place. A few red hot shot, or bursting shells, would give us a bonfire of truly alarming proportions. Urgent requisitions, it is said, have been made by Flag Officer Dupont for a large steamer with which to run down the ram, and for one or more iron-mailed floating batteries of the Monitor class for service here and at Charleston.