The Press.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1862.

☞ We can take no notice of anonymous communications. We do not return rejected manuscripts.

☞ Voluntary correspondence solicited from all parts of the world, and especially from our different military and naval departments. When used, it will be paid for.

THE NEWS.

We present to-day some additional and very late Southern news from Richmond, papers of the 27th ult. These journals prate in praise of the prudence of Southern generals. It is not the generals who are quiet—it is the Cabinet, and the shrewdest of all statesmen has said, "When senators and ministers are silent it bodes no public weal."

GEN. CASSIUS M. CLAY is not in Washington. The delay of sending him to the field is no fault of his. Gen. Clay is to be in New York in a few days, and has been invited to deliver addresses there and in Brooklyn.

THE English herring fishery is in danger. French luggers have just been discovered making free with the shoals, and several have been captured and brought into the Tyne as fair prizes.

A LETTER from Rome, published by the *Wanderer*, of Vienna, contains the following statement: "The Pope's health is not very satisfactory. His own position and that of Italy weigh on his mind. His Holiness lately remarked to an ecclesiastical dignitary, 'The hand of Providence has already written for me the *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin*. My days are numbered; my nots are weighed in the balance of Divine justice, and I hope they will not be found too far wanting; my empire is falling into secular hands. Will it be for long? who knows?' The Pope almost every day received visits from foreign priests, chiefly French and Belgian. In answer to the questions addressed to him on the subject of his personal fears or hopes, he usually replies in very few words, and it is evident that such questions do not please him."

LETTERS from Charles W. Russell, of Wheeling Virginia, and Robert Johnson, of Clarksburg, both members of the rebel Congress, have recently come into the possession of the provost marshal at Wheeling. They reveal the fact that an oath taken by persons who, for instance, travel over the Baltimore road, the penalty for violation of which is death (if the person who takes it is afterwards found in arms), is not respected by the rebel Government, and their Secretary of War writes to Messrs. Russell and Johnson that the violators "will be protected by this Government if they fall into the hands of the enemy, as if they had taken no such oaths or made no such promises."

A LARGE meeting was held in Tremont Temple, Boston, on Sunday evening, to give thanks for the issue of the President's emancipation proclamation. Rev. Dr. Kirk presided, and addresses were made by Messrs. Warren, Grimes, Waterston, and John C. Cluer.

AT a meeting of the Senior Class of Harvard College, on Saturday, resolutions of respect to the memory of Samuel Shelton Gould, of the 13th Massachusetts Regiment, who fell at the battle of Antietam, Sept. 17, were passed.

FOUR of the colonels of the Massachusetts volunteers—Gordon, Devens, Briggs, and Cowdin—have been raised to the rank of brigadier generals. Col. Couch, of the 7th Regiment, has been raised to the rank of major general, and now commands an army corps.

The Nomination of Mr. Webb.

It will be seen by a reference to our advertising columns, that a number of the Democratic citizens of the First Congressional district have invited Mr. EDWARD G. WEBB to become a candidate for Congress, on a loyal platform and as a supporter of the war policy of the Administration. This action was rendered proper by the refusal of the Republican Convention to nominate a candidate against Mr. RANDALL. The necessity of defeating such an able and audacious representative of the disloyal Democracy as Mr. RANDALL impressed itself upon the Convention, and, as will be seen, has made a deep impression upon the loyal Democrats of his district. We are glad that Mr. WEBB has made such a noble and manly response. He is not an active politician, and can have no interest in the present contest beyond that which every true patriot will always feel. We trust that the citizens of the First district, who belong to political organizations with which Mr. WEBB, heretofore, has had no sympathy—the Republicans and People's Party men—will follow the example of the Union Convention, and support Mr. WEBB. He can only be elected by a tremendous effort, and he needs the support of every true and loyal man. The First district is looked upon as hopelessly Democratic, and only by the action of conscientious and loyal Democrats can it be reformed. In taking up Mr. WEBB they have done a brave and good thing, and all our humble efforts shall go to secure his triumph.

The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing.

"Overtures of peace!" "The South has made, is making, or will make, overtures of peace."

The words are in every one's mouth. The merchant repeats them in the intervals of trade; they are passed from banker to banker on 'change; those whose profession it is to stand between the State and the individual identify themselves now with their clients, and look, with as much anxiety as the humblest, for the next act of the great national drama, while the ministers of that Gospel whose spiritual essence and outward form are "peace," read the news over and over, uncertain what it really means, but not daring to interpret it by their Bibles and their hopes. And not alone among representative men and classes does this vague suspicion struggle with the glad welcome which the first hearing of the words would naturally excite. In the depth of the great masses of the people, the syllable is whispered with distrust; even the mothers and sisters and wives, the lives of whose supporters and loved ones are risked more and more by every successive hour's continuance of war—even they who look wearily up from the darkness of a sorrowful past, and they who peer anxiously forth to a blood-enfolded future, mutter the tidings ominously. Peace! How softly the word falls on one maiden's breast and calls up all the love-richened blood of that yearning heart in one wild throb of hope! Peace! What music to a mother's ears that has heard, in a thousand dreams, the moans of her son, gasping his life out in unsoothed pain! Peace! So dear to the wife that she forms her infant's prattle to lisp the word that brings a father home, on a lasting furlough, to love and every domestic joy! Peace—peace—falling everywhere like a blessing, and a benediction, and a balm. What, then, is this dismal shadow that falls across and blots our sunshine? Why cannot the word realize itself in all the fullness of its blessed meaning? How is it that our commercial interests dare not trust it, nor our domestic affections solace themselves with its promises? Let us see.

Every American who can recall the events of the last ten years, knows that peace is not an end in itself, and that, therefore, neither excellence nor the contrary can be predicated of it. We have at last learned this—the fallacy of the opposite belief having plunged us into all our present troubles. We know now that only as a peace is an honorable peace ought it to be maintained when possessed, or desired when afar off. We see now that the peace of the last ten years has been too dearly bought at the price of honor and political probity and compromise of every right, and the subserviency of a nation to the lordly demands of a few whose aristocracy, founded on the enslavement of black men, aspired to domineer over the freedom of white men. No, no! Too bitterly have we learned that honor must go before peace, to make now a peace void of all honor.

But further, peace, to have any value, must bring with it the assurance of its perpetuity. What use to heal here if the poison will burst out there, or to take an anodyne and think ourselves restored? Peace is not a tangible entity; it is only the condition of the undisturbed workings of Governmental functions. But will the South be likely to bring us such a condition? Has it ever brought it? Has it not been a source of continual irritation and every political vexation? Has it not threatened and blustered and bullied and browbeaten? Has it not always wrung out each new concession by a threat of war? And is not the agricultural institution which it represents made inherently aggressive by its everlasting but *necessary* clamors for more room? Therefore, with a firebrand in our midst, and a flame at all our corners, how can we hope that "peace" means anything else than silence to the alarm-bells and unimpeded facilities to the destroyer?

This is a false peace which may be offered us—only a cessation of hostilities to patch up a new bungle. *We* have already made a peace by making the only grounds upon which it can be permanently secured. President LINCOLN has proclaimed the peace. The South is too late to hoodwink us again.

The Contest in the Centre District.

The contest for Representative in the district composed of Lycoming, Clinton, Centre, Tioga, and Potter has assumed a very peculiar aspect. The Republicans have unanimously nominated Hon. WILLIAM H. ARMSTRONG, a very prominent member of the late Legislature, and a well-known public man in this State. He was in the lower house for two years, and gained the reputation of an able speaker, a close and industrious Representative. He was warmly supported for the Speakership, and was presented as a candidate for the United States Senate in the caucus which elected Mr. COWAN. The nomination of Mr. ARMSTRONG was made unanimously, all the members of the National Union party uniting to make him their standard-bearer. His great services seemed to warrant his nomination, and his election as a friend of the Administration would have been a gratifying and noble triumph. All we know of Mr. ARMSTRONG leads us to believe that he would make a most capable and reliable Representative.

For reasons with which we are not acquainted, a movement is being made to defeat Mr. ARMSTRONG. At the head of this movement we have the Hon. JAMES T. HALE, at present a member of Congress from this district. The announcement that Mr. HALE has consented to oppose Mr. ARMSTRONG causes great grief and surprise among his many friends in Philadelphia. He is a Republican, has been identified with the boldest doctrines of the Republican party, and is warmly devoted to the suppression of the rebellion. Why he should consent to be the champion of Democrats and Secessionists we are at a loss to know. There can be no motive of personal ambition, for Judge HALE is too upright a man to be swayed by any such considerations. There can surely be no wish to give strength and life to the Secession organizations we regret to hear existing in the central district. Judge HALE declined being a candidate before the National Union Convention—gave no indication of any wish to court the sympathy of the Breckinridge Democracy, and was regarded by the friends of Mr. ARMSTRONG as his friend and supporter.

At all events, there is but one duty left to all loyal men in the central district. However much they may esteem Judge HALE, they must regard him in the position of one who is endeavoring to embarrass the Administration, and use every means to prevent his election. We are sorry to be compelled to enter into such a contest, but the duty is paramount, inevitable, and should be performed.

Condescending Loyalty Declined.

There is a class of men, not very large, except in their own intellectual conceit, but very annoying to thoroughly loyal men, and very pernicious in the circle to which their influence reaches, who think that they are conferring an inestimable favor on this American Republic by condescending to draw their knightly swords in its behalf. These fellows are generally drawn from that stratum which furnishes the elegant inanities of social life. They are well dressed and well addressed, but empty-headed, and often worse than empty-hearted. The patronizing air that they assume in civil life and exercise so loftily seems to suit the army, and they carry into the service sentiments that would not be permitted in any loyal community, and manners that would not be tolerated in a drawing-room. The President has made an example to all such men by his dismissal of Major KEY from General HALLECK's staff. We trust that he will continue to deal with the officers of the army as he has dealt with Major KEY. The Republic wants no one in her service who does not feel the conscience of her cause, and when officers of the army talk about Abolitionism, sympathy, Southern brethren, and a war for the negro, they should be dropped from the rolls.

Promotion from the Ranks.

The order received from the War Department to-day, earnestly requesting the Governors of the several States to fill vacancies of command "by promoting officers, non-commissioned officers and privates, who have distinguished themselves in the field, or who have shown a capacity for military command," is only a more definite official embodiment of a policy adopted long since by the Department, but only partially carried out by the States. No order has ever been issued which is more needed, or which will be more salutary both morally and practically. As a matter of simple justice, and as a matter of common sense, it is equally needed; for who should—in virtue of their claims and their capacities, grounded on, and developed by, heroic achievement—hold the commanding positions in the organizations to which they are attached if not those who have dared all, endured all, and thus learned all? Hail to the day that shall see this order most vigorously enforced, even if the country must thereby reconcile itself to the loss of innumerable dandy shoulder-straps! And hail to the brave fellows who shall hereafter be raised to the proud distinctions that they have so honorably earned!

The Next News from Europe.

The foreign intelligence by the Europa, which we published yesterday, comes down to the 21st ult., and indicates a strong desire, on the part of certain London newspapers, and a number of Manchester and Liverpool cotton-men, to involve England and France in a deadly war with the United States, nominally to assist the revolted South by acknowledging its independence, but with the real and scarcely-concealed purpose of getting a supply of cotton for the brokers and spinners of Lancashire. These disinterested speculations had been published close upon the arrival of news in England that the rebel army was about crossing the Potomac, with the full expectation of ample fraternization and assistance from "Maryland, my Maryland!" the invasion of that State being considered by one sagacious editor as fully equivalent to the loss, on the field of battle, of half a million of Union soldiers.

Every cloud has its silver lining, MILTON says, and ours was the fact that Maryland did not fraternize with the rebels, and that the result of the raid, from which so much was expected, was defeat. Driven back, with great losses, which have considerably demoralized it, the rebel army has lost what little prestige it ever had, and in a short time will be utterly discomfited and dispersed. When the news of the Union triumph in Maryland reaches Europe, how will the editorial gentlemen of London and Paris, of Liverpool and Manchester, receive it? They reckoned, as a dead certainty, upon the disgrace and defeat of the Union cause in Maryland; and the reverse has occurred. In a few days we shall know how our kind friends across the Atlantic have taken the news of our recently rolling back the tide of war from Maryland into Virginia. The City of Washington, which was to leave Liverpool on the 24th ult., may bring us this intelligence; if not, we are almost sure of receiving it by the Persia, which leaves Liverpool on the 27th, and Queenstown (Cove of Cork) on the 28th, and, at her usual rapid rate of steaming, may be expected at New York on this day week. We may receive her news, *viâ* Cape Race, through the Associated Press, next Monday evening.

THOMAS' BOOK-TRADE SALE.—The 59th half yearly sale commenced yesterday, at the Auction Rooms, South Fourth street. The attendance of purchasers was respectable—the prices were generally fair. Miller, & Burlock, of this city, had a good invoice of Bible and Photograph Albums, in all varieties of binding, which went off very well. To-day, the sales will include invoices by Sheldon & Co., James G. Gregory, Francis & Lantrel, New York; Gould & Lincoln, J. E. Tilton & Co., Tomkins & Co., Lee & Shepard, Boston; and E. H. Butler & Co., Charles Desilver, Crissy & Markley, Moss & Co., Theodore Bliss, H. Hooker, J. B. Smith, and Altemus & Co. The invoices of Sheldon, Tilton, and Altemus, include Photograph Albums.

PEREMPTORY SALE.—Sugar Refinery, Coal Lands, Arch-street Residence, 24 acres Passyunk, &c., 21st October. See third page of to-day's *Press*.

Public Entertainments.

WALNUT-STREET THEATRE.—Mr. E. Eddy, a new name to Philadelphians, made his second appearance last night as *Jean*, the rag picker of Paris. His audience was full, and his reception complimentary. Though not of the legitimate order of dramatic literature, this drama will always be productive of sensation, and Mr Eddy's portraiture of the principal character must always prove acceptable. In time the talent evidenced in his every action will doubtless qualify him for the high position to which he aspires.

ARCH-STREET THEATRE.—Miss Bateman, last night, reappeared in her *role of Julia*. In point of art her acting was faultless; a touch of nature only was wanting. Edwin Adams, whose name is a synonym for excellence, and James Wallack, Jr., portrayed the nature of their respective characters with most admirable art. The house was crowded, and the applause an ovation.

FROM WASHINGTON.

Special Despatches to "The Press."

[WASHINGTON, September 30, 1862.

Three Blows.

The programme of army movements, whispered about, involves three simultaneous blows—one at Richmond, one at the Gordonsville Railroad connections, and one at the rebels at Winchester. SIGEL is already known to have begun on one.

Rumor of Sigel's Resignation.

The streets are full of a rumor that General SIGEL has tendered his resignation, in consequence of alleged imputations on his personal courage said to have been repeatedly made by General HALLECK in the presence of different persons, as well as of neglects and rebuffs, said to have been several times received from the same source.

Congressman Vallandigham.

Western politicians recently arrived here represent that VALLANDIGHAM will certainly be defeated, notwithstanding the herculean efforts he is making for re-election.

The Peace Canard.

The story that peace commissioners are on their way from the rebels to Washington, and that this is the cause of the late apparent inactivity on the Potomac, is, of course, a sensation canard.

Surgeon General Hammond and the Philadelphia Hospitals.

Surgeon General HAMMOND has left Washington for Philadelphia, to inspect the hospitals there, and see what further arrangements are needed to secure comfort to the wounded from the late battles.

Suicide.

AMOS B. LITTLE, of New Hampshire, formerly an examiner in the Patent Office, committed suicide in the dining-room of the National Hotel, during a temporary fit of insanity, by cutting his throat with a carving knife. He died almost instantly.

Reconnoissance to Warrenton and White Plains—Rebels Captured and Paroled.

Recently Gen. STAHL's brigade, being a part of Gen. SIGEL's corps, advanced to Warrenton Junction, about 41 miles from Washington, without meeting the enemy. Yesterday they went to Warrenton village, and there made a large number of sick and wounded rebels, together with a few conscripts, prisoners, whom they paroled. Gen. STAHL continued his reconnoissance to Salem and White Plains, but found no rebels in that neighborhood.

A report prevailed at Alexandria to day that Gen. SIGEL's troops had recaptured all the engines and cars which the enemy obtained from the wreck at Bristow and Warrenton Junction.

Nothing is known here, as reported, of any disagreement between Gen. SIGEL and the War Department.

Miscellaneous.

The dismissal, by the President, of Major JOHN J. KEY, additional aid-de-camp attached to General HALLECK's staff, for the utterance of disloyal sentiments, is regarded as an excellent example in high quarters, and a hope is expressed that it may be followed up until the army shall be thoroughly purged of those officers who so frequently offend the ear of loyal citizens by seditious and treasonable words. Major KEY, it is but just to say, whatever may have been the offence for which he has been dismissed, bore a fair character as an officer, and his loyalty was never previously suspected. He was not, however, an officer of General HALLECK's own selection, but had been assigned to him. He was thus attached to the staff without the personal acquaintance or confidence of General HALLECK. He has been constantly employed in detached staff duties, such as local provost marshal for towns and cities, supervising agent at different points, etc. He has never been employed in any confidential capacity at headquarters which would give him access to information that could by any possibility be of service to the enemy. Not, however, because of any question of his loyalty had been raised, but because Gen. HALLECK had no personal knowledge of him such as would induce the confidence of important or secret information. Major KEY is from Indiana, but is said to have large contingent interests in the slave States.

Mr. TIMBY has the broad patent from the United States for the revolving tower for land and water fortifications. This is acknowledged to be a great national invention, and will do credit to American genius and energy.

Messrs. BITTENHOUS, FANT, & Co., and other bankers here are receiving large orders for revenue or tax stamps, and postage currency. The latter cannot be supplied, except in small quantities.

The only stamps ready for delivery at the office of the Commission of Internal Revenue are check stamps for checks, drafts or orders on sight, and proprietary stamps for patent medicines, cosmetics, etc. The other stamps will be ready in a few days, of which notice will be given, so that purchasers may know how to frame their orders

The following officers, sent home from the Western Gulf blockading squadron, have to-day been dismissed from the service: Master's Mate JOHN DUNCAN, as worthless; Gunner WM. YATES, as worthless; Gunner WM. SOMERS, for drunkenness; Master's Mate E. J. ALLEN, drunkenness; Master's Mate JOHN COFFEY, drunkenness, and Master's Mate WM. WHITE, worthless.

Lieutenant Commander H. C. BLAKE has been detached from the Sabine and ordered to the temporary command of the E. B. Cuyler, vice Lieutenant WM. C. WEST, previously ordered, has been condemned by medical survey.

Lieutenant Commanding WM. D. WHITING is detached from the Wyandotte and ordered to the command of the gunboat Ottawa, vice Lieutenant Commander J. B. CREIGHTON, detached.

Gunner GEORGE SCRAN is detached from the Sabine, and ordered to the Naval Academy.

Captain O. S. GLISON's orders to command the Iroquois is revoked, and he is ordered to the command of the United States steam-sloop Mohican.

The Commissioner of Internal Revenue has given the following opinion in regard to the liability of railway companies to the payment of stamp duties. The item marked "express," on page 89 of the excise law, was not intended to embrace the freight business of railroads and ordinary wagoners, but is limited to persons who are express carriers, and not merely common carriers under the law. This distinction is very well known in practical business. The express carrier is usually expected to take the parcel, box, or bundle from the house or place of business of the consignor, and deliver it to the house or place of business of the consignee, while a railway company receive and deliver goods only at its own station. In the absence of specific language in the statute authorizing the broadest construction, I must hold the persons and companies engaged in transporting goods over the country, as such business is usually performed by railway corporations, as not liable to the payment of a stamp tax upon the receipts given for such goods. I am also of opinion that the first item in the schedule does not include such receipts for freight as are usually given by railway companies. A receipt is, no doubt, in a technical sense, an agreement or contract, but, in the ordinary use of language, this close construction does not hold. Had Congress intended to include receipts, it would have been easy to have so provided in plain language.

A court martial has been ordered to meet at Fort Columbus, New York, to-morrow, for the trial of Ordnance Sergeant BALDWIN, charged with assault on Capt. S. M. SPROLE, of the 9th Infantry United States army.

All prisoners of State now on parole, by authority from the headquarters of the Military District of Washington, will report in person forthwith to the Military Governor of this District. This is with a view to their exchange for Union prisoners now at Richmond.

Important Order from General Halleck—Brave Men to be Raised from the Ranks.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 30.—The following has just been issued from the headquarters of the army:

CIRCULAR.—From casualties in the field, and from absence by reason of sickness, many volunteer regiments have not a sufficient number of officers to command them. It is important that vacancies caused by deaths and resignations be filled with the least possible delay.

The Governors of the several States are earnestly requested to fill these vacancies by promoting officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates, who have distinguished themselves in the field, or who have shown a capacity for military command.

Without the hope of promotion there is no encouragement for a faithful performance of duty, and no stimulus to deeds of valor. Moreover, the discipline and efficiency of an army depend, in a great measure, on the character and qualifications of its officers. Without good officers, the very best soldiers soon become a mere military mob, the inefficiency of which is increased by the increase of its members. H. W. HALLECK,

General-in-Chief.

The Battles of South Mountain and Antietam—Gen. McClellan's Official Report.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 30.—The following report of the victories of South Mountain and Antietam has been forwarded to the headquarters of the army by General McClellan:

NEAR SHARPSBURG, Sept. 29—1.30 P. M.

Major Gen. Halleck, General-in-chief U. S. A.:

GENERAL: I have the honor to report the following as some of the results of the battles of South Mountain and Antietam:

At South mountain our loss was—	
Killed	433
Wounded	1,806
Missing	76
Total	2,325
At Antietam our loss was—	
Killed	2,010
Wounded	9,416
Missing	1,043
Total	12,469
Loss in the two battles	14,794

The rebels, in the two battles, as near as can be ascertained from the number of their dead found upon the field, and from other data, will not fall short of the following estimate:

Major Davis, Assistant Inspector General, who superintends the burial of the dead, reports about three thousand rebels buried upon the field of Antietam, by our troops. Previous to this, however, the rebels had buried many of their own dead upon the distant portion of the battle-field, which they occupied after the battle, probably at least five hundred.

The loss of the rebels at South Mountain cannot be ascertained with accuracy; but as our troops continually drove them, from the commencement of the action, and as a much greater number of their dead were seen on the field than of our own men, it is not unreasonable to suppose that their loss was greater than ours. Estimating their killed at 500, the total rebel killed, in the two battles, would be 4,000. According to the ratio of our own killed and wounded, this would make their loss in wounded 18,742.

As nearly as can be ascertained at this time, the number of prisoners taken by our troops in the two battles, will, at the lowest estimate, amount to 5,000. The full returns will, no doubt, show a larger number. Of these, about 1,200 are wounded.

This gives the rebel loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners, 25,542. It will be observed that this does not include their stragglers, the number of whom is said by citizens here to be large.

It may be safely concluded, therefore, that the rebel army lost at least 30,000 of their best troops during their campaign in Maryland.

From the time our troops first encountered the enemy in Maryland until he was driven back into Virginia, we captured 13 guns, 7 caissons, 9 limbers, 39 colors, and 1 signal flag.

We have not lost a single gun or color. On the battle-field of Antietam 14,000 small arms were collected, besides the large number carried off by citizens and those distributed on the grounds to the recruits and other unarmed men arriving immediately after the battle.

At South Mountain no collection of small arms was made, owing to the haste of the pursuit from that point; 400 were taken on the opposite side of the Potomac.

GEORGE B. MCCLELLAN,

Major General Commanding.

HIGHLY IMPORTANT NEWS.

Arrival of the Keystone State from Port Royal.

News from the Coast Stations.

THE ATTACK ON MOBILE.

From Pensacola and Key West.

THE NASHVILLE PENNED UP IN THE OKEECHEE.

SHE CANNOT ESCAPE.

Full Particulars of Rebel Rams Constructing at Savannah and Charleston.

DEFENCES OF MOBILE, SAVANNAH, AND CHARLESTON.

Sailing Master of the Nashville Captured.

HIS FULL STATEMENT OF LATE EVENTS.

HOW CHARLESTON AND FORT SUMPTER LOOK.

[Special Correspondence of The Press.]

PORT ROYAL, Sept. 26.

ARRIVAL OF GEN. MITCHELL.

Major General Ormsby McKnight Mitchell arrived at Port Royal on the 20th instant, and assumed command of the new department from which Gen. Hunter had been relieved. He was warmly received by the troops, who seemed greatly pleased at the change of commanders. The "gallant Mitchell" had become a household word with them. He made an eloquent speech on taking command, during the delivery of which he was warmly applauded.

A few days after his arrival, General Mitchell visited Fort Pulaski, and inspected the works, expressing entire satisfaction with the condition of affairs there.

THE LATE AFFAIRS ON ST. JOHN'S RIVER.

The rebels having erected a battery on a high bluff on St. John's river, the gunboats Uncas and Paul Jones have been continually shelling them out, but without any definite result as yet.

THE NASHVILLE.

I learn that the Nashville is at present penned up by three gunboats at the Railroad wharf on the Great Okeechee river. There is no possible chance for her to escape, one of the gunboats being stationed at Hell Gate, another at Buzzard's Island, and another in the centre of the river channel.

CAPTURE OF THE CHIEF OFFICER OF THE NASHVILLE AND KATE.

John M. Fenson, late chief officer of the steamer Nashville, and more recently of the Kate, has been captured at last on a pilot boat, while attempting to run the blockade. He will be sent North to-day by the Keystone State, which vessel will also take out Admiral Dupont and Commodore Rogers, who go directly to Washington for special instructions relative to the management of the fleet now greatly increasing in our Gulf stations.

I have had a conversation with Susson, and he states that he had command of the Nashville, and ran the blockade with her several times. She only carries one gun on her forecastle, and generally a crew of from thirty-five to forty men. Captain Gooding, a merchant seaman, has command of the Nashville, and is daily watching for an opportunity to escape with her. Susson, previous to his capture, left Ossaba, on the Georgia coast, in command of the Kate, having been transferred from the Nashville, on the 24th of last July, and went to Nassau, N. P. Heran out at high noon, in the sight of three blockading vessels. On reaching Nassau he abandoned the Kate, and taking command of a pilot boat, attempted to run into Charleston, when he and his party were captured. They were taken to Port Royal as prisoners of war.

REBEL RAMS BUILDING.

The rebel ram, Fingal, building at Savannah, will soon be completed, and when her iron-plating is finished she will be fully equal in point of strength to the Merrimac. She was an English iron steamer, and ran the blockade early last spring, and on this account is much stronger than ordinary vessels, being encased in every part. She was built at Greenock, in England.

The rebels have cut this vessel down, raising her some eight feet, and widening her by the introduction of eight feet of white oak on either side, bolted on, and the iron plating is bolted and riveted to this. The whole vessel is roofed over with iron, on the same principle as that evident in the construction of the Merrimac.

She is provided with eight-hundred-horse-power, double-oscillating engines, and will be a troublesome customer, if she is ever allowed to get out from the Savannah river.

The ram Georgia, also building at Savannah, and the Palmetto State, commonly called the Ladies' Gunboat, and a third (name unknown) building at Charleston, will probably prove failures. The reason why one of these gunboats has the cognomen of the Ladies' Gunboat is, that it has been built chiefly from small contributions by the Southern ladies. The rebels report that these gunboats were of little account all along, but it must be remembered that they cried "failure" up to the very day that Buchanan brought the invulnerable Merrimac out into the Hampton Roads, and spread consternation over the whole country.

DEFENCES OF CHARLESTON AND SAVANNAH.

These two cities are being newly fortified continually. The work in the trenches is done by thousands of poor slaves, the white men having all enlisted and are now under arms. The whole quarter of the city of Charleston which was destroyed by fire last spring, and the squares and streets, are all defended by rifle pits, so that the people may have the impression that the city itself would be defended to the last, even after the national troops may enter it. All the corner houses of the streets are fitted up as block houses and barricades, from which riflemen will fire upon the Yankees, provided they do not shell the city in advance and burn it down.

Charleston bay is obstructed directly across the shipway with piles, fire-rafts, &c., in order to keep vessels from entering. When a vessel runs the blockade one of the rafts is removed and she is allowed to pass in, when the vacuum is at once filled up with the raft removed.

It is impossible to tell the exact number of men forming the garrison of Fort Sumpter, as it is used as a sort of school for the instruction of green troops, and the force is continually being changed from the fort to other points. The petty officers and privates in the fort are, for the most part, composed of Germans and Frenchmen, together with criminals of all sorts.

Three gunboats are also guarding the harbor of Charleston, mounting three nine-inch guns, and one rifled pivot each. They have no masts, and are to be used as ram gunboats, and for the immediate defence of the city. These are called the "blood tubs" of the harbor, and are a butt for the jokes and jibes of the citizens.

CHARLESTON WILL FALL.

Everybody seems to think that Charleston will be soon attacked, and that Gen. Mitchell is maturing his plans for its capture. In the Charleston *Mercury* of the 22d, I learn that our troops had appeared in force on Broad river. Although I have been here for some months, of course I know nothing *publicly* of anything that is going on in the planning way. I may express the opinion of all here by saying that the flag will soon again wave over Sumpter's battlements, without causing any detriment even to the most delicate Government interest.

SUFFERING IN THE SOUTH.

The rebels in Charleston and throughout the South are certainly suffering for many of the necessaries of life, but this is just the reason why we should push them harder than ever, and force them to succumb before the bugaboo of foreign recognition comes to scare us off the coast.

Soap is selling in Charleston at two dollars per pound, and salt is worth fifty dollars per bag—*i. e.*, soap is worth of United States currency about one dollar per pound, and salt about twenty-five dollars per sack. Rather strong, that!

The principal salt works of the rebels are at Bulee and Montgomery, places that might easily be captured; and the rebels are in a perfect amazement to know how it is that our fleet does so little with so much to do and so easily done.

MATTERS HERE.

Contrabands are coming in here now daily by hundreds. General Mitchell will not let pro-slavery and Breckinridge army-officers keep them back. There is but little work for these poor devils to do; but a brigade of five thousand will soon be organized and ready to bear the brunt of an action, or do the hard work of entrenching, if necessary.

The force here has been considerably increased of late; the health of the troops is excellent. They are in the very best of spirits, and have the most unbounded enthusiasm about Gen. Mitchell, who, they say, will lead them in the field soon to certain victory. H. A. W.

LATE FROM PENSACOLA.

HIGHLY IMPORTANT NEWS.

PENSACOLA, Sept. 20, 1862.

THE BLOCKADING FLEET.

We have quite a fleet collecting here, and are anxiously awaiting the arrival of iron-clads, "little Monitors," and all sorts of "rams," and when all is ready we are going to take Fort Morgan and Mobile, it is said. To attempt these captures with wooden ships, it seems to me, would prove disastrous, even though the affair were managed by Admiral Farragut.

DESCRIPTION OF FORT MORGAN.

Fort Morgan, the main defence of Mobile, is judiciously situated on the right bank of the channel, and mounts about one hundred guns. The main channel near the fort is seventeen fathoms deep, and will admit of the passage of the largest vessels.

PLAN OF ATTACK RECOMMENDED.

If the plan of taking Mobile be the same as that carried out so successfully at New Orleans by Admiral Farragut in running by the forts, cutting off supplies, and forcing them to surrender, we have little doubt that we shall have as much success at Mobile as we could possibly desire.

SECOND DEFENCE OF MOBILE.

Fort Gaines, the second work of defence for Mobile, is situated on Dauphin's Island; mounts fifty guns, and can direct an excellent and formidable crossfire with Fort Morgan.

IRON-CLADS NECESSARY.

I have had considerable experience in naval warfare since the breaking out of the rebellion, and must give it out as my opinion that without an iron-clad protecting vessel it will be impossible to take Mobile, Savannah, or Charleston without great loss of life and valuable vessels.

WHAT OUR FLEET AND GUNS HAVE DONE.

It is hardly necessary for me to say that every reliance may safely be placed upon the vessels, commanders, crews, and guns of the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron when a grand naval advance is ordered. They are ready, and have been tried and found perfect in every particular, defying the world for a match. During the past year scarcely a gun has disgraced itself in our entire navy. Even the old 50-pound Dahlgrens that have been recently recalled from the service by the Navy Department have fully redeemed any reputation they have gained heretofore, as the terrible destruction these guns did at Vicksburg will attest.

The famous Parrott gun has done excellently well throughout the war, and I have never seen a man who would venture one word against this great engine of destruction. The bursting of the 100-pounder on the Naugatuck, in the James river, was the only accident, I believe, that has occurred to this gun during the war. The nine-inch Dahlgren is the most destructive gun in the service for short-range practice, and they are now held in high favor. The Navy Department has recently issued a circular from the pen of Captain Dahlgren, in which I find the statement made that these guns may be fired with twenty pounds of powder for shot or shell. The thirty-two pounders are still famous for long-range work. The Dahlgren boat-howitzer suits well for the "tops" of vessels, from whence they can pour down upon the heads of the enemy showers of grape and shrapnel. With such weapons as these there need be no fear that our war vessels will not succeed.

RECONNOISSANCE TO FORT GAINES.

Fort Gaines, near Mobile, has been for some time past, from reports that have reached here, evacuated by the enemy. To ascertain that fact, the steam frigate Susquehanna, Commodore Hitchcock, ventured towards that fort, and received a number of leaden messengers. It was unnecessary, of course, to investigate the matter any further. The commander of the gunboat Winona, in order to know to a certainty the truth of the rumors, ventured in and received a similar reception to that tendered to the Susquehanna. This was enough to convince any one that the garrison still existed. It is said that the garrison at Fort Morgan sent off word to the blockading fleet that they were ready for us at any time. Wooden walls stood well on the Mississippi, and could do so, perhaps, at Mobile, but, as we have vessels better suited for such service, we ought to use them. The army may co-operate with the navy, and, by so doing, might strengthen the form of attack. Vessels-of-war are pouring into Pensacola harbor daily, and they swell Admiral Farragut's fleet to a great armada. Those here at present, are the flagship Hartford, and the Brooklyn—the latter is hauled up alongside the wharf, and is undergoing repairs; sailing frigate Potomac; steam frigate Susquehanna; sailing sloops Vincennes and Preble—the latter has been made a hospital ship; gunboats Kennebec, Kenawa, Cayuga, Genshock, and Westfield. Mortar fleet—Ferry-boat Clifton, Lieut. Commanding Law, and 6 mortar schooners, with a number of ordnance ships, transports, &c.

THE PENSACOLA NAVY YARD.

It is my intention to say a few words concerning the Pensacola navy yard, and, to use a common expression, all that is left of it you might put in your pocket. The yard in times of its prosperity was one of the finest our Government possessed. It was seldom sought after except by Southern officers, of the navy, affording them a home and accommodation in their own "Sunny South." The officers' quarters, a fine strong substantial row of buildings, have fallen to ruins by the hands of those men for whom the United States Government intended them for a home, and thus the traitorous scoundrels have treated that father who has always been a protection and safeguard to them from the time they placed themselves under his care. In a conversation with an old inhabitant of Pensacola, he told me that the fate of Pensacola navy yard had been decided some months before the actual event came off. That is, in every house the furniture had been piled up, and rosin and chipped pine wood placed in the corners, with a match in readiness for their destruction. The fine roads have all been torn up. The armory and chapel, two circular buildings, are all that are left of the once magnificent navy yard of the cotton States, and these have been paid a visit from Fort Pickens by two 11-inch shells descending through the dome to the basement, which took place during the bombardment. The yard is surrounded by high walls; a number of strong gates command the entrance; the centre leads into the town of Warrington, once occupied by negroes and washerwomen of the officers of the yard and of vessels coming into the harbor.

THE SPIRIT RATION.

The United States Congress made a great mistake in abolishing the spirit ration in the navy. I am told that it will have the effect to drive out all of the old seamen from the service. I am sure I do not go beyond the truth in saying this. There is nothing that yields so much satisfaction to an old sea dog as his regular glass of grog. If he does not get it he growls at everybody and everything, and, consequently, every one is in a bad humor.

COL. BILLY WILSON'S ZOUAVES.

Col. Billy Wilson's famous regiment of New York Zouaves have been quartered here for the last fourteen months; during which time they have been engaged in the quiet enjoyment of every luxury that this part of the country could afford. The men of this regiment have grown famous in the "foraging" way. They have no scruples in appropriating to their own use everything that they can lay their hands on, that has ever been, or is now, the property of Secessionists. They spent a considerable time in Fort Pickens, forming a part of the garrison, and attaining the efficiency of the regular troops. They have been changed in a most surprising manner, from New York fire boys and freebooters into excellent soldiers.

REBEL RESIDENCES.

The residence of Major Chase is occupied at present by General Arnold as his headquarters, and that of Ex-Senator Mallory by the famous Billy Wilson. While passing the latter recently I found a large body of the Zouaves hanging pictures quietly around the chimney tops, turrets, and cornices, taking the benefit of a cool breeze with the greatest nonchalance—their legs dangling down, and acting generally as if perfectly satisfied with their present position, and determined to make the most of it. Colonel Wilson was sitting on the front porch. I gave him a "good evening," and he returned the compliment with the military grace of a commander-in-chief, and the coolness of the "oldest inhabitant."

THE EXPECTED ATTACK ON NEW ORLEANS.

News arrived here some time since of an anticipated attack on the city of New Orleans by the rebels, and all of the troops were ordered to hold themselves in readiness to proceed to that quarter, and among them the Zouaves. The poor fellows seemed overjoyed to think that at last the Government was going to give them something to do in the way of fighting. They left for the Crescent City in the steamer Ocean Queen, and as the noble vessel passed the various men-of-war lying in the harbor here, they gave nine cheers for the gallant Yankee tars. The guns of Fort Pickens thundered forth a final salute as the steamer passed safely over the bar with its cargo of humanity.

NAVAL ITEMS.

The steam sloop-of-war Iroquois has been ordered to the coast of Texas, to protect our interests in that quarter.

I learn that there is at present at Vera Crescury, coast of Mexico, a great number of first-class English frigates and steamers congregated, for what purpose it is difficult to conjecture.

SANITARY CONDITION OF TH