The Press.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 1864.

FORNEY'S WAR PRESS.

For Saturday, Jan. 30, is just issued and for sale. Its contents are extremely interesting.

ILLUSTRATION.—The Great Calamity in Chili: the Burning of the Splendid Cathedral of St. Iago. The "WAR PRESS" contains the fullest account of this extraordinary disaster.

STORY.—Miss Emma Eglesson's highly dramatic story of "Lesbland Maud," founded upon a mystery of real occurrence in the early life of the West.

WAR MATTERS.—The extracts from the rebel journals, which appear in this number, possess great historic value and readable variety. Important intelligence from all quarters of the South will render the "WAR PRESS" invaluable for perusal and reference.

The Editorial and Literary character of the present number will command interest. The accustomed departments invaluable to farmers, merchants, and other classes, are fully sustained. As a compendium of intelligence the "WAR PRESS" will hardly fail to meet all demands.

Specimens of the "WAR PRESS" will be forwarded when requested. The subscription rate for single copies is $2 per year. A reduction from these terms will be allowed when clubs are formed. Single copies, put up in wrappers, ready for mailing, may be obtained at the counter. Price five cents.

Lands for the Freedmen.

That the liberation of the Southern slaves is a benefit to themselves and the country we must now be satisfied, for though the sudden breaking up of a system of labor by an army has often resulted in local misery, the general condition of the freedmen is in every way encouraging. They have made moral, intellectual, and material progress. They are learning to read, to write, to marry, to respect the ten commandments, and to support themselves. Provision has been made for the education of over six thousand children in Washington; and from South Carolina, where the experiment of freedom has been most fairly tried, we hear no complaints that the freedmen lack industry, order, or self respect. But, though satisfied with the liberation of the slaves, we cannot be content with their condition. The following facts, which are furnished us by a trustworthy correspondent who has made a special study of the plantation system on the sea-islands of South Carolina, will show how much is to be done.

Last March all the lands in the Port Royal district were sold to pay the taxes due on them, and the larger portion was bought by the United States, and is yet to be disposed of. It was understood, by all interested in the grand experiment of free labor in the South, that an opportunity would be speedily afforded for the colored people to become owners of the soil. The instructions given to the commissioners sent to the district last fall contemplated this great reform, but too much, we fear, was left to individual discretion. The majority of the board, either through indifference or want of judgment, defeated the measures originally intended by the Government and demanded by the people. The plans they adopted would, beyond question, enable speculators to obtain possession of the lands, thus leaving the freedmen living on the soil entirely under the control of the purchasers; for it is plain that either the freedmen would be forced to work for such wages as the proprietors might choose to give, or to quit their homes and seek employment elsewhere. This system would be little more than one of social slavery, and would justify the opponents of emancipation in declaring that the slaves virtually exchange masters when they are formally declared free. No class of laborers can be truly free working upon soil they do not own; if an agricultural population is to be independent and progressive, the farmer must own the farm. It is especially evident that we cannot make freemen of slaves by obliging them to work for others and denying them the simple privilege of owning the land they till. We must not merely act generously toward these negroes, we must deal justly with our own experiment of liberation.

The lands reserved by the commissioners for the freedmen, even had they been surveyed and put in readiness, would be entirely insufficient to accommodate the constantly increasing number. This matter was so clear that General SAXTON and Judge SMITH, one of the commissioners, recently sent an agent to Washington to obtain further instructions from the Government. These were promptly given, and they limit the land that can be pre-empted by any single person to forty acres, except in certain specified cases. We believe that, next to the Proclamation of Emancipation, this is the wisest and most important measure yet adopted for the reorganization of Southern labor. It will break up, to a great extent, the immense plantations formerly ruled by one man and worked for his sole profit; it will give the land to the people who live upon it; it will give the freedmen an incentive to industry, and must do more for their improvement than all the schools that can be established. The Government has adopted a plan which the people of the North thoroughly approve, and by which all classes in the South will permanently profit; for the principles which these instructions embody are not merely essential to the prosperity of the South Carolina sea-islands, but must be the basis of a grand reform throughout all the slave territory which freedom shall reclaim.

The land to be sold at public auction by the tax commissioners for the United States, and open to pre-emption, is about 43,000 acres, exclusive of 5,000 acres reserved for school funds. The freedmen number about 18,000, one-fifth of whom are eligible to pre-empt. Numbers of soldiers and sailors will also claim lands, and there is little doubt that the whole territory will be occupied by a working, independent population, which will, in the words of General SAXTON, "make cotton more of a king than ever." The solitary objection to the plan which promises these invaluable results must be made by the speculators in land, who have been suddenly disappointed. It is true that the two gentlemen who form the majority of the Board of Commissioners declare the action of the Government illegal, but their opposition cannot change a policy which is almost universally approved. Meetings of the freedmen and their families on all the plantations, and a large mass meeting held in Beaufort, have shown with what feelings of real joy these plans are welcomed. The Government has begun a noble reform; each one of us is interested in its complete and speedy success.

The Alexandra.

We see it stated, as from the English papers, that, on the 11th February, the Court of Exchequer in London would pronounce its decision, whether a new trial should be granted in the case of the Alexandra, seized at Liverpool, by the British Government, for alleged violation of the Foreign Enlistment Act. There *must* be a mistake here as to date. By two acts of Parliament, passed in 1830, the Law Terms, previously moveable, according to the changes of the calendar, were declared fixed. Hilary Term now legally commences on the 11th and ends on the 31st January. Easter Term, which comes next, begins on April 15th and terminates on May 13th. It is possible that the Court could pronounce its decision in the sittings after Term—that is, in February—but it is wholly out of the question that it would appoint such a contingent time so far in advance. It is probable that the case was brought up on the 11th January, the first day of Hilary Term. It is difficult to judge what the Court will decide. Law, as well as justice, would ordain that the verdict be set aside, and a new trial granted, but if the Court of Exchequer so decide, by a majority of its five judges, it is a virtual admission of the charge preferred by the Crown lawyers, that Chief Baron POLLOCK, head of that Court, who tried the case, misdirected the jury in his summing-up. Sir FREDERICK POLLOCK, who has been a good lawyer in his time, is now a crochetty gentleman more than eighty years old, who does not know how to submit gracefully to being in a minority. If a new trial be granted, the Court will thereby intimate that the Chief Baron blundered. Some judges would take that decision as a hint that it was time to retire, at an advanced age, but POLLOCK sticks to station as a limpet clings to a rock, and so

"Superfluous lags the veteran on the stage."

The Grant of Land Scrip from Congress to Pennsylvania.

We understand that the land scrip is now ready for sale, and that parties wishing to purchase it may do so by applying for it to the Surveyor General at Harrisburg. As the State cannot locate the scrip, but must sell it to parties who can do so, and any person purchasing may do so, this will no doubt prove a very profitable source of investment; and those wishing to invest in it would do well to do so at once. It is divided into portions of one quarter of a section each, and may be located upon any vacant public lands subject to sale at private entry. The State holds scrip for 780,000 acres ready for sale.

THE statement of a Southern refugee, which Mr. GEORGE H. BOKER has so forcibly written, will be read with unusual interest. The terrible picture of the condition of the Union prisoners in Charleston owes nothing to the imagination of Mr. BOKER, who has probably suppressed details too repulsive to be printed; nor is the statement one which should excite sentimental pity. The lady who, at the risk of her life, labored so constantly in the prisons of our wounded soldiers, deserves gratitude, and has nobly earned the reward she asks. This is only to be employed in the hospitals of the United States. Mr. BOKER has eloquently appealed to the loyal sympathies of Philadelphians, but the story is more eloquent than any words.

The Restoration of Arkansas.

THE PRESIDENT'S INSTRUCTIONS TO GEN. STEELE.

EXECUTIVE MANSION,
WASHINGTON, Jan. 20, 1864.

Major General Steele:—

Simply assume that the State of Arkansas position one that an election may be held in that State, at which to elect a Governor; that it be assumed at that election there will be thereafterward, that the Constitution and laws of the State will be in force the exception, are in full force, except that the Constitution is so modified as to declare that there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except in the punishment of crimes, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted; that the General Assembly may make such provisions for the freed people as shall recognize and declare their permanent freedom and provide for their education, and which may yet be construed as a temporary arrangement suitable to their present condition as a laboring, landless, and homeless class; that said election shall be held on the 25th March, 1864, at all the usual places of the State, or all such as voters may attend for that purpose; that the voters attending such place at 8 o'clock in the morning of said day may choose judges and clerks of election for that purpose; that all persons qualified by said Constitution and laws, and taking the oath prescribed in the President's proclamation of December 8th, 1863, either before or at the election, and not otherwise, may be voters; that each set of judges and clerks may make returns directly to you, on or before the — day of next; that, if duly certified returns, said election may be conducted according to said modified Constitution and laws; that, on receipt of said election, when 5,647 votes shall have been cast, you can receive said votes, and ascertain all who shall thereby appear to have been elected; that, on the — day of — next, all persons so appearing to have been elected, who shall appear before you at Little Rock and take the oath, to be by you severally administered, to support the Constitution of the United States, and said modified Constitution of the State of Arkansas, and be declared by you qualified and empowered to severally enter upon the duties of the offices to which they shall have been respectively elected.

You will please order an election to take place on the 28th of March, 1864, and returns to be made in fifteen days thereafter.

A. LINCOLN.

Mutiny in the Rebel Army.

[By People's Telegraph Line.]

WASHINGTON, Jan. 27.—The *Republican* of this evening publishes the following:

"It is now certain that a serious emeute occurred in the rebel camp near Stevenson. On Saturday last heavy musketry and artillery firing was heard, insomuch that a message was sent forward to the cavalry pickets from headquarters to ascertain what was going on. Deserters who came in state that a regiment attempted to desert, and a serious affair occurred.

"There was some firing on Friday, and the insurrection in camp came to a crisis on Saturday. The cause of Jeff Davis is getting more and more shaky."

A Southern Refugee.

The case which I am about to introduce needs neither preface nor apology. Although an appeal to the public is at all times distasteful to a private man, I shrink from it in my duty towards my conscience if I hesitate to give publicity to the following statement of facts, or refused to vouch for its truth under such a claim to belief as my signature may carry with it.

The common understanding in the North is that the Southern people are united against us; that men, women, and children regard us with a hatred which their traitorous friends are ever ready to justify, and at which even loyal minds do not wonder. This idea will be somewhat modified by the following narrative. Even in the city of Charleston, where the first daring blow was struck against the national authority—a city which is now looked upon as the very focus of the rebellion—there exist a number of loyal people who are bold enough to perform the duties of humanity, despite the jeers and threats of their fellow-citizens. The lady whose history forms the subject of my communication was a consistent and out-spoken Union woman from the time of the Secession Convention until the day of her departure from Charleston; nor was she without allies, who sustained her in their sympathy, and put into her hands the means by which she accomplished great good toward our suffering prisoners of war.

The facts which the lady relates are sustained by documentary evidence, principally letters from the prisoners themselves, which would fill a small volume. All these letters have been examined with care, and compared with the clear and truthful narrative of the lady, so that I have not a doubt of the accuracy of her statement. Many of the letters are from officers of the army and navy of the United States who were known to be prisoners of war in Charleston at the time of their occurrence, and they all breathe one spirit of thankfulness towards the good angel which Providence sent to them in the midst of horrors without parallel anywhere but in the South. Some of the prisoners declare that they owe their lives entirely to her exertions, and all of them express warmth of gratitude that must arise from very deep feelings.

When the first Union prisoners were sent to the Charleston jail the universal sentiment amongst the rebel citizens was, "Now we have some of these Yankees in our power; let us treat them according to their deserts." To the shame of the soldiers who had the prisoners in charge, they permitted themselves to be influenced by the popular clamor.

The prisoners were treated with the utmost rigor; or rather, they were shut up in a filthy jail, and systematically neglected in every point, a state of things to which any treatment, however severe, would have been merciful. They were stripped of their clothing, they were starved, they were almost deprived of water, they were never permitted to pass the confines of their filthy chamber, they were abused by every person, and they were threatened with instant death on the slightest infraction of the military rules of the jail. Hearing of this deplorable state of affairs, the lady before mentioned obtained access to the prisoners by means not necessary to specify, and found their condition to be even worse than it had been described to her. She immediately set herself to the task of alleviating their suffering. She secretly collected from the Union men of Charleston thirty-five hundred dollars, to which sum she added five hundred dollars of her own small fortune, and with this money she from time to time purchased such provisions and comforts as she thought necessary for the prisoners, and privately introduced her stores during her daily visits to the jail, for she had her kind ones in here. She and her children faithfully nursed those of the prisoners who were suffering with wounds or with disease, and expended their own money in medicines in alleviating the exacting wants of the sick bed. These scenes of misery were sufficiently trying to a kind-hearted woman, but worse scenes were yet to come.

On the arrival at Charleston of the prisoners from the captured steamer Isaac Smith, the lady prepared herself with a large supply of provisions, and entered the jail. The first sight that met her eyes was the body of a stalwart, athletic man lying upon the floor, perfectly naked, and apparently dead. On stooping to examine him, she found that he was not dead, but in a stupor, produced by extreme suffering. She applied a large bowl of tea to his lips, when, to her astonishment, he seized it and drained it almost at a draught. This man had not had so much as a drop of water for two days, and his throat and lips were terribly wounded upon the heat, and from one wide and putrid wound she washed a double-handful of flies and maggots. Owing to her judicious nursing, this man lived to thank his benefactress. The second man she saw lying in a corner of the prison was a young boy, with his limbs drawn up and twisted together as if he were then in the agonies of death. Observing that the lady was making towards him and object, the jailor said: "You need not trouble yourself about that man. The doctor says he has not five minutes of life in him." So this lad passed on to the other sufferers who might be benefited by her care, and she found that they were all in mortal need of her services, but none, as she afterwards discovered, to her horror, was in such need as the young man whom she had just passed by, thinking his case hopeless. On visiting the prison the next day she found him still lying in the position she had left him, and had left him, alive, and smeared over with the filth whether poor creatures in the frenzy of famine, had gathered from the floor and within their reach during delirious moments. Feeding all the lady could do for him, died at the end of another day. I know that this scene is revolting to common sensibility, but it is not given to excite sentimental pity nor pleasant tears. It is the stern, hard, terrible truth, which the men of the North should hear and know, to deal with the miscreants who inhabit the doomed city whereon this tragedy was enacted.

As long as the Union prisoners remained in Charleston the lady was assiduous in her attentions to them; but there came an order removing them to Columbia, and then that tie of her affection for Charleston was broken. She prepared to quit a home which she had occupied for twenty years, and, if possible, to make her way to the North. Already she had received warnings from her friends, and notice to quit the town from her enemies. She and her children were hooted out with hoots and jeers as they passed along the streets. They were denounced as "damned Yankees," and on one occasion some chivalric of the South took up what, in their exaggerated language, they term a "brick," and buried it after the helpless woman. Gathering together her movable household goods and her scanty funds, now much reduced, with her family of four young children, she, at great expense, made her way to Richmond, and was permitted to cross within our lines.

For the last seven months she has resided at the North, her small stock of money and valuables gradually melting away, while she vainly endeavored to find some suitable employment for herself and her family. Her oldest son has been an invalid for many weeks, requiring her constant care to insure his recovery. Her younger son has found a place with a jeweler, and is contributing some what towards the support of the family. It is the hospital at Hilton Head, or at some other South-ern post, where her knowledge of the diseases of the climate would be of value. I trust that the gentlemen who have it in their power to assist her in such a situation will communicate to me their willingness to do so. At the present time the lady is in an almost destitute condition, and I appeal to zens to send to my address, at the Union League House, 1118 Chestnut street, such contributions as they may feel it to be their duty to make. Her case is so peculiar, and so far removed from connection with the ordinary claims upon our generosity, that I make this general application with a full confidence as to its result. In justice to the lady, I must say that it is done on my own motion, after gaining from her a very reluctant assent to the publication. If those who may read this appeal desire an interview with the lady in question, I shall be happy to furnish her name and address to the inquirers. They will hear from her a full account of her experiences in Charleston, a part of which I have been obliged to suppress for obvious public reasons.

GEORGE H. BOKER.

JANUARY 27, 1864.

WASHINGTON.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 27.

Congressional Gossip.

It is said that Senator BAYARD will be succeeded in his seat in the Senate by a younger man and a Copperhead. GARRETT DAVIS will not be expelled, and it is doubtful whether he will be censured by the Senate. The vote in the House last night against appropriating any more money for the Capitol extension shows that Congress is determined to reduce the appropriations so far as is possible.

Confirmation by the Senate.

The Senate, to-day, in executive session, confirmed the nomination of A. LAWRENCE FOSTER for Commissioner of the District of Virginia, under the law for the collection of direct taxes in insurrectionary districts of the United States.

Iron-Clads.

Instructions have been sent to the commanding officers of the navy-yards at Portsmouth, N. H., and Boston, enjoining them to hurry up, as rapidly as possible, the completion of the large navy-yard iron-clads in course of construction at these places. It will be remembered that all the iron-clads now in service in the United States were built by contractors, not one having been constructed at a navy-yard. Four of the vessels—the Miantonomah, Monadnock, Tonawanda, and Agamenticus—were ordered to be built at the four navy-yards, and one of them only is launched. It is probable that, in compliance with the wishes of the Navy Department, the others will be put afloat within a month. Information has been received, however, that the plating of the Tonawanda has commenced, which will render it possible to finish her very speedily after she is afloat.

Capture of Blockade-Runners.

Despatches received at the Navy Department state that on the night of the 2d of January the U. S. steamer Huron captured in Doboy Sound, Georgia, the British schooner Sylvanus, of and from Nassau, N. P. On being discovered she attempted to escape, and paying no attention to a shell fired to bring her to, she was fired into, and sunk near the shore. She was about 60 tons register, with a cargo consisting principally of salt, whisky, and cordage. It was thought the latter articles might be saved with a favorable tide. The papers found on board, together with the officers, crew, and one passenger, are prisoners in all, were sent to Rear Admiral DAHLGREN for disposal.

Decisions by the Secretary of the Treasury.

The following decisions have been made by the Secretary of the Treasury, arising upon appeals by importers from the decisions of collectors relating to the proper classification under the tariff act of July, 1862, of certain articles of manufacture and production: Bags of American manufacture exported from the United States filled with grain, and afterwards imported empty, or exported empty and afterwards imported filled with grain, will hereafter be admitted free upon the production of the proof of such origin required by the law and the regulations of the department. An appeal was taken from a decision assessing duty on pig copper at the rate of two cents per pound on certain regulus of copper imported from Canada, the importer claiming that under the reciprocity treaty the article was not entitled to enter duty free as copper ore. The Secretary of the Treasury has overruled the decision on the ground that, under the reciprocity treaty, the ores of metals of all kinds are entitled to free entry.

Jute-twine, as distinguished from jute-yarn, was properly assessed at the rate of 35 per cent. *ad valorem* duty.

The manufacture of jet, in cases where the ornamentation was not sufficiently material to change the character of the article, was properly assessed at 35 per cent.

An importer of shingles, from Canada, claimed that they were not liable to duty under the reciprocity treaty. The Secretary says that an inspection of the sample shows the article to be such as is manufactured in part by planing, shaving, or a process of manufacture other than the rough hewing or sawing, and is not embraced in the terms of the treaty; consequently it is liable to duty at the rate of 30 per cent *ad valorem*.

Certain importers having appealed from the assessment duty of 35 per centum *ad valorem* on "patent cast-steel tires," styled "cast-steel locomotive tires in the rough," the Secretary of the Treasury has decided that the article having assumed a shape or proportion indicative of its purpose, and from which it would require but little labor to make in the ordinary course of manufacture to divert it from its intended use to be steel in another form, but must be classified as a partial manufacture and subject to a duty of 35 per cent. *ad valorem*.

The Public Printing.

The report of JOHN D. DEFRESS, superintendent of the public printing, shows the following results: The money expended for printing paper and binding, from October 1, 1862, to September 30, 1863, amounted to $1,455,000. The year preceding paid out $549,000, the excess being principally for blanks for the various departments. The cost of printing and binding executed during the last year, if paid for at the prices established by the law of 1852, would have cost $375,500 more than has been expended for that purpose. The government printing office was established in March, 1861, since which time, up to September 30, 1863, the printing and binding has cost $668,600 less than it would have cost at the old prices. The report concludes as follows: "The character of the printing and binding, in material and workmanship, is superior to that furnished under any system which has preceded the present, and the experiment of the Government doing its own work, both as regards its quality and economy of its cost, may be regarded as completely successful."

The Army.

General BANKS writes to members of Congress here that with ten thousand more troops he can clear Louisiana and Texas of rebel troops. The reinstatement of General Banks in the chief command of the 13th Army Corps, it is said, will raise an issue with General GRANT. General BANKS is here from Norfolk. It is rumored that he is to have command of a corps under General MEADE.

The Custom Frauds.

In the Committee on Public Expenditures, this morning, Mr. DENISON, surveyor of the port of New York, gave some further reference to the custom-house frauds. The history of the discovery of the frauds was investigated.

Gen. Sickles to have a Command.

It is said to-night that Gen. AUGUR will be sent into the field, and that the command of the defences of Washington will be given to General SICKLES.

Gen. McClernand.

The President to-day restored Gen. McCLERNAND to his rank, and ordered him to report to Gen. BANKS.

Recovery of Treasury Notes.

After a recent fire in Iowa almost $10,000 in treasury notes, which had been deposited in a safe, were found almost in a completely charred mass. These have just been sent to Washington, and Mr. U. S. Treasurer General SPINNER was to-day personally engaged in supervising their examination, to ascertain the precise amount. Owing to the chemical properties of the ink, subjected to the action of the fire, the denominations were ascertained, though in the process of careful separation some of the notes fell to pieces.

Death of a Consul General.

JOHN HITZBRENIN, consul general of Switzerland, died here to-day. He was sixty-seven years of age, and was a native of Switzerland. He had resided in Washington for thirty-two years, during eleven of which he discharged the duties of that office.

Appointed.

The President has appointed U. A. MERRIWEATHER United States marshal for Kentucky, vice McDONNELL, resigned.

The New Pennsylvania State Agent.

Lieut. Col. FRANCIS JORDAN, the newly appointed State agent for Pennsylvania, has arrived here, and entered upon his duties.

The Proposed Government Boat Race.

The Assistant Secretary of the Navy to-day addressed the following letter to Messrs. OLIPHANT & Co., of New York:

NAVY DEPARTMENT, Jan. 27, 1864.

DEAR SIR: After our conversation on Monday I met Mr. Baird, your engineer, at the Astor House, and agreed upon, and he then handed me your note of the 26th inst., offering $22,000, to be given the day after two weeks' detention, as the prize which the owners of the Kin Kiang require to cover expenses before permitting the trial of speed between her and the Eutaw. I handed your note to Capt. Comstock for Mr. Hitchcock, with the previous understanding that those gentlemen were to be responsible for the money by subscription the money necessary to pay the expenses of the Kin Kiang. I am informed that the amount is considered inadequate, and that a considerable difficulty will be found in obtaining it. I understand, however, the circumstances under which you are induced to make the offer, and, for your seeking, and all loyal people will appreciate the remark of Mr. Oliphant, that it is a national point of view his proposition is made, and that it is a national contest. The Kin Kiang is almost the exact tonnage of the Eutaw, and has run sixteen knots per hour, and I agree with Mr. Oliphant that no vessel afloat, or outside of New York even exceeded that rate. This extraordinary speed makes me the more anxious to have the trial made, and I trust parties will come forward and remove the pecuniary difficulty. Without it, I will take the liberty of handing this letter to the press. Yours, &c., G. V. FOX.

ARMY OF THE POTOMAC.

Review of Kilpatrick's Cavalry.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, January 27.

Fifty-three contrabands of all sizes and sexes came to the headquarters to-day. They left their plantation, near Orange Court House, on Monday, crossing the Rapidan near the railroad in boats. Five or six of their original number were captured by the rebels before crossing.

A review of Kilpatrick's cavalry division, with field exercise, was held to-day. Gen. Gregg, temporarily in command of the cavalry corps, and numerous lady visitors, were in attendance.

Shots are occasionally exchanged between the pickets on the Rapidan, but no casualties have lately been reported on our side.

A Court of Inquiry in Missouri.

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo., Jan. 27.—General Brown has asked for a court of inquiry to investigate the charges made by U. S. Senator Wilkinson that he (Brown) had confined forty Union soldiers for refusing to take arms, and that, by his orders, soldiers and citizens have been arrested for hurrahing for Jim Lane; and the inquiry to be extended to all matters connected with the management of affairs in the Central District of Missouri.

General Brown has issued an order directing the provost marshal to recommend three enlisted men for each company of colored men in his district.

New Orleans.

NEW YORK, Jan. 27.—The steamer Merrimac arrived last night from New Orleans, via Key West, on the 22d. She left at Key West the frigate Colorado, bound to Portsmouth, and the Huntsville, Tioga, San Jacinto, and De Soto. She brings no news.

NEW YORK, Jan. 27.—The steamer Empire City has arrived from New Orleans. She brings papers of the 18th instant, but they contain no news.

Sale of Coal by Auction.

NEW YORK, Jan. 27.—Twenty-four thousand tons of Scranton coal were sold at auction to-day, at $6.50 to $7.50 per ton, being a slight decline from the price in December.

REBEL NEWS.

THE BURNING OF HOSPITAL BUILDINGS IN RICHMOND.

INCENDIARY ATTEMPT ON THE PRESIDENTIAL MANSION.

HALF THE CHARLESTON FORCES ABSENTEES AND STRAGGLERS.

HEALTH OF ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS.

FORTRESS MONROE, Jan. 27.—The Petersburg *Express*, of January 22d, says that seven hospital buildings at Camp Winder, near Richmond, were burned yesterday. A large quantity of commissary stores and clothing was destroyed.

The Charleston *Courier*, of Tuesday, says: "The bombardment of the city continues the same as previously reported. The damage has been very small in comparison to the number of shots and weight of metal fired."

PASCAGOULA, Miss., Jan. 20.—The enemy's reveille, and also a repeated discharge of musketry on the west end of Horn Island, were heard this morning.

Two gunboats are in sight off Point Bois Island.

On the 18th a fore and aft schooner was captured while attempting to run the blockade, by a Federal gunboat.

The same paper also says: "An unsuccessful attempt was made to burn the Presidential mansion at Richmond on Tuesday night last.

"Nearly half our military force is scattered, as absentee and stragglers, over the country. If they were all returned, not another man would be needed in the field.

"The steamer Advance ran on the beach under the guns of Fort Caswell, while attempting to run the blockade of Wilmington, N. C. The crew are supposed to be safe. The cargo will be saved, but the ship is a total loss."

The Richmond *Enquirer*, of January 19th, says:

"Mr. Hidell, secretary of the Vice President, received a despatch yesterday from Augusta, announcing the sudden and serious illness of Mr. Stephens. He was attacked on Sunday morning. This attack, with the well-known state of his health during the winter, creates serious apprehensions in regard to him."

SKIRMISHING IN EAST TENNESSEE.

RUSSELLVILLE, Jan. 19.—A reconnoitring party of the enemy drove in our cavalry pickets, and were in turn driven back. Both pickets now occupy their original positions. Rebel cavalry picketing was heard yesterday in the direction of Jonesville. It is supposed that the enemy have attacked General W. E. Jones.

AFFAIRS ON THE RAPIDAN.

ORANGE COURT HOUSE, Va., Jan. 18.—The enemy have pushed their pickets to Robinson's river, advancing two miles.

THE WAR IN TENNESSEE.

Raid from Florence, Ala., on the Railroad to Nashville.

ATHENS CAPTURED BY THE REBEL GEN. FORREST.

Re enlisting Pennsylvania Veterans.

[Correspondence of The Press.]

CHARLESTON, Va., Jan. 25, 1864.

There has been a detail of veterans of the 1st Company C, a Pennsylvania company of the 1st New York Cavalry, about where they should be enrolled. Nearly all the men of the company desire to go to New York, on account of the large bounty. Captain Stevenson, of this company, has been trying his very best to induce the men to stick to their own State; but up till to-day had only succeeded in procuring about six of them who were willing to take their chances in Pennsylvania. On returning from the scout, this P. M., the Captain addressed his men before dismissing them, explaining to them the many advantages to be gained by enrolling in their own State, and hoped they would not turn their back on Pennsylvania, for the sake of a few paltry dollars, to save the Copperheads of New York from the draft. The men applauded several times during the address, and at its conclusion nearly every man signified his intention to stick by the old "Keystone State" for better or for worse. The friends of these brave men will soon have the pleasure of welcoming them home to their homes to recruit their thinned ranks, and prepare for the final struggle which will crush this foul rebellion, and rig up the old "ship of State" in finer style than ever, and put her whole crew upon the same footing as regards that greatest of blessings, liberty. A PENNSYLVANIAN.

FORTRESS MONROE, Va., Jan. 24, 1864.

GENERAL ORDERS, No. 12.—Inasmuch as the rebels of the Confederate States are sending their women and children through the lines of this department, and retaining by law all able-bodied male persons, it is ordered:

1. That no white women or children will be permitted to come through the lines, without a pass from these headquarters, or the headquarters of the Army of North Carolina.

2. All able-bodied men will be received, detained until reported to these headquarters, or the headquarters of the Army of North and Army of North Carolina, and orders are given concerning them.

3. Nothing in this order shall be construed in conflict with General Order No. 46, relating to colored persons.

By command of Major General B. F. Butler.

R. S. DAVIS,
Maj. and Ass't Adj. General.

List of vessels passed by Guard-ship Young Rover, inward bound, Jan. 26: Steamer Reliance, Capt. Jenington, from Alexandria to Fortress Monroe; steamer Volunteer, Capt. Norrell, from New York to Beaufort. Sailed: Steamer City of Richmond, Captain Kelly; steamer Perrit, Captain Delano; steamer John A. Warner, Captain Cone; steamer Quindaro, Capt. Beckett; schooner Ann Eliza, Capt. Pease, to Baltimore; steamer New Jersey, Capt. Hoxie, to New York.

Major General Peck arrived this morning from Newbern, N. C.

KANSAS.

LEAVENWORTH, Jan. 26.—The troops at Fort Gibson are reported to be on half-rations, owing to the defective supply system.

The Kansas Legislature has welcomed Gen. Curtis, by a unanimous vote, as a general of military renown and tried loyalty.

The difficulty between Gen. Fremont and Samuel Hallett threatens to delay the work on the Pacific Railroad. The weather is mild, and the ice is breaking up.

MEMPHIS.

CAIRO, Jan. 27.—The steamer Belle has arrived with Memphis dates to the 25th instant and 292 bales cotton. She also brings 450 re-enlisted men of the Kansas Cavalry, and about the same number of furloughed men from various other regiments en route home.

The sales of cotton in Memphis, on the 24th inst., were at a small advance. The receipts were 72 bales. From 700 to 800 bales changed hands on the 23d.

New York Politics—Meeting of the Democratic State Convention.

ALBANY, Jan. 27.—A meeting of the Democratic State Convention for the election of delegates to the National Convention, has been called to meet on the 24th of February.

The editors of the daily Democratic papers of this State held a Convention here to-day, and are the guests of Governor Seymour this evening.

Capture of United States Sailors—A Negro Hung by the Rebels.

BOSTON, Jan. 27.—Letters received here state that a boat's crew of the United States brig Perry were captured in December, while attempting to cut out a schooner on the coast of South Carolina. They are now confined in Columbia, S. C., and are well treated. One of the party, a colored man, was hung as soon as he was captured.

XXXVIIIth CONGRESS—1st SESSION.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 27, 1864.

SENATE.

Bills Presented.

Mr. CONNESS, of California, introduced a bill providing for the better organization of Indian affairs in California. Referred to the Senate Indian Affairs.

Mr. FESSENDEN, of Maine, introduced a bill to increase the salaries of inspectors of the navy, and for a sum not exceeding $1 per day. The bill was passed.

Mr. LANE, of Indiana, introduced a bill providing for the safe and speedy transmission of soldiers to their families and friends at home. The bill defends the mode of making up the navy paymaster returns in paying off enlisted men, and remits to the auditor for examination, who shall be located in the California communion, who shall be located in the master, with one clerk for each fifteen regiment under his jurisdiction. Referred to the Committee on Military Affairs.

Mr. SHERMAN, of Ohio, presented a petition from the distillers of Cincinnati, in reference to the tax on distilled spirits. Referred to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. HALE, of New Hampshire, reported from the Committee on Naval Affairs the following bill: That hereafter all appointments in the volunteer naval service of the United States shall be submitted to the Senate for confirmation, in the same way and manner as appointments in the regular navy are required to be; and all appointments hitherto made shall cease and determine at the expiration of sixty days from the time of the return of the vessels in which those holding them are respectively employed.

Bill to Promote Enlistments—Colored Recruits.

Mr. WILSON, of Massachusetts, called up the bill to promote enlistments.

Mr. GRIMES, of Iowa, moved to amend the bill by inserting in lieu of two months' advance pay to colored recruits a month's bounty, not exceeding twenty dollars, as the President may direct in the several States.

Mr. POWELL, of Kentucky, moved to strike out the third section, which sets free the mother, wife, and children of a negro recruit.

Mr. HENDERSON, of Missouri, desired to amend the second section so as to refer only to the relatives of slave recruits of disloyal owners.

Mr. SUMNER thought the present law accomplished the object of the bill. He would fill to be stricken out the idea of making men fight for us and leaving their wives as chattels behind them.

Mr. WILKINSON, of Minnesota, thought the present law was a most unlawful and disgraceful legislation. What was freedom worth to a soldier's wife and children? He was in favor of freeing all connected with fighting our battles.

Mr. HENDERSON had not been engaged in support of slavery lately. He was a strong advocate of the policy, if Congress had power to do it—if Congress had power to pass this bill—it had also power to abolish slavery at once in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Missouri, as an institution which stands in the way of peace. Did the Senate hesitate to exercise the power?

Mr. GRIMES had no doubt of it at all. He would vote for the first bill to this effect.

Mr. HENDERSON said he was not disposed to go into a discussion of the question as to the powers of the Government. He had voted for it. He saw no necessity for the proposed legislation. It would be a great misfortune if the loyal people of States which were now perfecting their organization, and the authorities of the State could amend the statute, and go out of the institution immediately. It would be one of the blessings which would flow from this war against rebellion.

The Resolution to Expel Mr. Davis.

The morning hour having expired, the Senate proceeded to the consideration of the resolution to expel Mr. Davis, with the amendment of Mr. FESSENDEN, that it only a vote of censure.

Mr. DAVIS (Ky.) addressed the Senate in reply to Mr. J. Dixon, and characterized the instances cited by him yesterday of opposition to the Executive policy as not being parallel to this case. He would be glad to see the Senator from Kentucky for criticising the Government in this hour of peril. He (Mr. Davis) had no reference to the fact of Mr. Davis having arraigned his conduct for disloyalty. He (Mr. Davis) could not stand a moment in the Senate judged by the rule he would have applied to him. He also referred to the resolution of Jefferson Davis's Congress before the proclamation was issued, which, he said, gave full power to reduce the States to subjection.

Mr. DAVIS said he only meant in cases where the people interrupted the Government and refused to set up a Government for themselves. He was in favor of revive the military commander to establish a temporary Government.

Mr. MORRILL said the Senator had introduced more bills for the punishment of treason and the overturning of disloyal State Governments than any other Senator on this floor, and it was absolutely too late to set up for such a defence as was intended by the Senator. These resolutions were not words spoken in debate. They were a suggestion to the President of a policy offered. He adverted to authorities as to the extent of the privileges allowed in debate, and contended that the resolution offered by the Senator was beyond the usual privileges.

Mr. HALE, of New Hampshire, said that all efforts to establish a rule limiting debate had and would continue to fail. He was sorry to see that as an indirect effort to do that which the Senate had repeatedly refused to do directly. He had no sympathy with the resolution of Jefferson Davis, but he should have preferred to have had attached to free discussion. He thought the Senate would do more mischievous than that of expulsion. The censure was equivalent to a reprimand. When the freedom of speech was curtailed the Senate had better go into an executive session in secret. The proposed course had been adopted, and sensitive on the subject, for years after ten years ago with scarcely a sympathizing Senator on this side. The proposed course had been adopted, for the honest expression of the sentiments of a portion of the majority, he would have been expelled. There had been others who had spoken treasonable words. The Senator from Massachusetts, Mr. Sumner, had occupied a position less defensible than Senator Davis, because there was any great difference of opinion in their views, but because he (Mr. Hale) was the older man. (Great laughter.) He was sorry to see the Senator of Delaware, who for years was in a minority here, but who was bold and fearless in the expression of his views on the policy of the Government. He would class Mr. Davis as one of the minority, regarding the Senator from Delaware as a better. We must foster sentiments of the sort, if we can liberty. Freedom of speech, as Webster had said, is no honor, no profit, no quality that can make us richer heritage to his children. We should be recreant to our duties if we should allow the majority of speech. In saying this, he did not mean that the Executive or the Senate could be wantonly insulted. He had listened to the able arguments of the Senators from Michigan and Maine, but they had failed to convince him that the Senate should pass the expulsion of Mr. Davis. It was a declaration of the apostle of American liberty, that "Error should be put to the worst in a free encounter where truth was left free to combat it." Truth was the protection of the Senatorial rule to use against resolutions of Mr. Davis. Freedom of debate should be maintained at all hazards.

Mr. POWELL, of Kentucky, said he was gratified at the language of the Senator from New Hampshire. The proper course of action was confined to free speech and a free press. When the matter was first mooted, he had proposed to have a resolution for the dismissal or rebuke of his colleague, but he found it was because he entertains opinions inimical to those of the Senator from Maine. The Senator who feared to sound the alarm of war administration on the part of the Government was less than a rascal, and deserved no seat here. It was a patriotic duty imposed upon Senators.

Mr. POWELL then proceeded in a lengthy analysis of the resolution of Mr. Davis, contending that the policy therein recommended, if inaugurated, would be, of all others, the most disastrous to the rebels. He admitted also upon