The Press.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22, 1865.

The Children of Our Soldiers.

There is a subject now attracting the attention of the Legislature which we trust will be considered with discrimination. The story is very simple, and will illustrate our argument. In 1862, when the State authorities were organizing after the disastrous campaign in the Peninsula, the corporation of the Pennsylvania Railroad tendered Governor CURTIN the sum of $50,000, to be used in raising troops. The Governor did not see that he had any power to disburse private contributions for State purposes, and so retained the sum until 1864, when, on the Executive recommendation, the Legislature authorized him to appropriate it, as his own judgment dictated, for the support of the destitute orphans of Pennsylvania soldiers. The Governor organized a plan exhibiting great wisdom and common sense, and which has grown and enlarged until there is now in the care of the State about four hundred orphan children, whose fathers were slain in the war, clothed, supported, and educated in schools and in private families out of the bounty of the State. As we understand the Governor's plan, these children are only taken by the State on the consent of the surviving parent. The cost of each scholar is from $120 to $130 a year, according to the locality. Yet this trust has been so discreetly and prudently managed that, notwithstanding what has been done, on the first of May one half the fund will remain on hand. This shows rigid economy. This year the Governor asked for an appropriation of $75,000 to enable him to extend the advantages of the project, and also, we understand, for the additional power to bind out these children, when educated, to some useful trade or profession.

The House acted on this proposition of the Governor, to our great surprise, by passing a bill taking the trust out of the Governor's hands, and adding it to the general school fund. And, as if to utterly undo all the good thus far accomplished, and throw the poor children of our soldiers upon the charity of the world, the bill of the House authorized the secretaries of the School Boards to dole out this appropriation in sums varying from fifteen to thirty dollars per annum. This would make these children essentially paupers. While the House was tinkering it might as well have entrusted the duty of doling out these sums to the overseers of the poor. So far as Philadelphia is concerned, we should a great deal rather have the Guardians of the Poor in charge of the fund than the gentlemen who have the management of the school system. However, the question to be looked at by our legislators is simply this: Is the Governor's policy right? Are we to have this great fund degraded and squandered by doling out pittances to paupers, or is it to be managed on an enlarged and liberal basis? Are these children of sons and brothers who have given up their lives to the country to be driven out into the cold, pitiless world without recognition or support? The Governor by care and prudence has built up a charity which in time will be among the proudest in Pennsylvania's already proud history, and we must insist, in the name of the people, that our representatives do not interfere in such a manner that it will be mismanaged and wasted. It is especially proper that ANDREW G. CURTIN should do this work. He is the friend of the soldier. He has identified himself with the interests of the army to such an extent that his name is spoken with love at every bivouac and camp-fire. The soldiers know this, and that in his hands their interests will be secure. Pennsylvania has led in the movement, and we know that in other States the Pennsylvania plan is being adopted. Shall it be said that in the very fruition of its success this grand charity was wantonly destroyed? We cannot send these children back to idleness and crime. They were gathered from the people, and should be trained to share in the glory of our State. By all means let the Governor be sustained in this matter, and let the House reconsider their hasty action.

Vice President Johnson.

We copy the subjoined article of the New York *Times* of Monday last, and commend it to those of our cotemporaries who seem to desire to rival the Opposition press in their assaults upon Vice President JOHNSON. It is within our knowledge that Governor JOHNSON left Nashville, to attend Mr. LINCOLN's reinauguration, most reluctantly, and greatly debilitated; but his friends insisted that he should be present, and he yielded to their advice. Unquestionably his indisposition on the 4th of March was the result of great physical weakness. We learn that Governor JOHNSON is perfectly restored to his usual vigorous health, and that he will soon leave for Tennessee to assist in the ceremonies of the instalment of the fighting preacher, WM. G. BROWNLOW, in the gubernatorial chair to which he has recently been elected by such a large majority.

The *Times* says:

"We copy from the *Congressional Globe* a report of the remarks by Vice President Andrew Johnson, on taking his place as President of the Senate, on the day of the inauguration. There may be differences of opinion as to the timeliness and good taste of some of the topics which he introduced on that occasion, but few will venture, we presume, to question publicly the justice of the sentiments which he expressed. Still less will any basis be found in the speech for the unmeasured and intemperate vituperation of the Vice President for which it was made the occasion. Two years ago the same journals which have been especially vehement in denouncing Mr. Johnson, teemed with similar charges upon Secretary Seward, and subsequently Gen. Grant was subjected to the same ordeal. Indeed it would not be easy to name any prominent member of the Government, who has not, at one time or another, been visited by personal assaults of the same general character, if his opinion on certain phases of public affairs happened to conflict with those of the parties in question. One would suppose that to the Secession and Copperhead journals of the country might safely be left the task of demolishing the character and influence of the men to whom the people have entrusted the duties and responsibilities of office. It is consoling, however, to know that wherever there is any appearance of shrinking or hesitation in that quarter, there are '*friends*' of the Administration not only ready but eager to come to the rescue. No man in this country has rendered, within his sphere, more substantial service to the Union cause, or earned more thoroughly the gratitude of the Union party than Andrew Johnson, and we venture to predict that, in the future as in the past, he will abundantly vindicate himself from the slanders of his enemies, and the ungenerous misconstruction of some who have claimed to be his friends."

THE VICE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH AT THE INAUGURATION.

[From the Congressional Globe.]

The Vice President elect—(Hon. Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee. In reply to the question as to whether he was ready to take the oath)—I am. (Then turning to the Senate, he said:) Senators: I am here to-day as the chosen Vice President of the United States, and as such, by constitutional provision, I am the presiding officer of this body. I therefore present myself here in obedience to the high behests of the American people to discharge a somewhat delicate duty, and not presumptuously to thrust myself in a position so exalted. May I at this moment—it may not be irrelevant to the occasion—advert to the working of our institutions under the Constitution which our fathers framed and Washington approved as exhibited by the position in which I stand before the American people, in the sight of the American people? Deem me not vain or arrogant; yet I should be less than man if, under such circumstances, I were not proud of being an American citizen, for to-day one who claims no high descent—one who comes from the ranks of the people—stands, by the choice of a free constituency, in the second place in this Government. There may be those to whom such things are not pleasing; but those who have labored for the consummation of a free government will appreciate and cherish institutions which exclude none, however obscure his origin, from places of trust and distinction. The people, in short, are the source of all power. You, Senators, you who constitute the Bench of the Supreme Court of the United States, are but the creatures of the American people; your exaltation is from them; the power of this Government consists in its nearness and approximation to the great mass of the people. You, Mr. Secretary Seward, Mr. Secretary Stanton, the Secretary of the Navy, and the others who are your associates—you know that you have my respect and my confidence—derive not your greatness and your power alone from President Lincoln. Humble as I am, plebeian as I may be deemed, permit me, in the presence of this brilliant assemblage, to enunciate the truth that courts and cabinets, the President and his advisers, derive their power and their greatness from the people. A President could not exist here forty-eight hours if he were as far removed from the people as the autocrat of Russia is separated from his subjects. Here the popular heart sustains President and Cabinet officers; the popular will gives them all their strength. Such an assertion of the great principles of this Government may be considered out of place, and I will not consume the time of these intelligent and enlightened people much longer; but I could not be insensible to these great truths when I, a plebeian, elected by the people the Vice President of these United States, am here to enter upon the discharge of my duties. For those duties I claim not the aptitude of my respected predecessor. Although I have occupied a seat in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, I am not learned in parliamentary law, and I shall be dependent on the courtesy of those Senators who have become familiar with the rules which are requisite for the good order of the body and the despatch of the business. I have only studied how I may best advance the interests of my State and of my country, and not the technical rules of order; and if I err, I shall appeal to this dignified body of representatives of States for kindness and indulgence.

Before I conclude this brief inaugural address, in the presence of this audience—and I, though a plebeian boy, am authorized by the principles of the Government under which I live to feel proudly conscious that I am a man, and grave dignitaries are but men—before the Supreme Court, the representatives of foreign Governments, Senators, and the people, I desire to proclaim that Tennessee, whose representative I have been, is free. She has bent the tyrant's rod, she has broken the yoke of slavery, and to-day she stands redeemed. She waited not for the exercise of power by Congress; it was her own act, and she is now as loyal, Mr. Attorney General, as is the State from which you come. It is the doctrine of the Federal Constitution that no State can go out of this Union; and, moreover, Congress cannot expel a State from this Union. Thank God, Tennessee has never been out of the Union! It is true, the operations of her Government were for a time interrupted; but she is still in the Union, and I am her representative. This day she elects her Governor and her Legislature, which will be convened on the first Monday of April, and again her Senators and Representatives will soon mingle with those of her sister States; and who shall gainsay it?—for the Constitution requires that to every State shall be guaranteed a republican form of government.

I now am prepared to take the oath of office and renew my allegiance to the Constitution of the United States.

Outrages on Colored Citizens.

If colored soldiers are to be treated with indignity by the conductors of passenger cars, we mistake the temper of Philadelphia and the laws of Pennsylvania. The men who refuse to soldiers of the United States even the miserable privilege of riding on the platforms of the cars, at night, will be punished by the censure of the community, and ought to bear the penalties of the law. The insult to the uniform is plain even to those who do not care for the insult to the race. Elsewhere will be found an account of the expulsion of two colored non-commissioned officers from one of the cars of the Fifth-street road, which will make the blood of many a reader burn with indignation.

Yesterday a colored man, whose only offence was that he carried a banner with the legend "Greeley is Coming," was beaten by a number of rowdies, and this outrage resulted in a brutal attack on one of the most eminent of our clergymen. The spirit which instigates such outrages does not rise to the dignity of wickedness. It is an extraordinary meanness, of which many ruffians, guerillas, bounty-jumpers, and pirates would be ashamed. The men who would glory over the expulsion of Union soldiers from the street cars, knock down colored men from mere wantonness, and beat clergymen who object to such brutality, are so far below the level of well-behaved brutes that it is doubtful if they could find common street curs to acknowledge them as masters.

The temperate conduct of the colored people, in spite of these extreme provocations, deserves the highest praise. Without yielding to injustice, they endure it, strong in the faith that the right must triumph. But we warn the persons who wrong them that Philadelphia will not bear these insults much longer. For the sake of her reputation we demand that these men, who treat free citizens as slaves, should be taught that the spirit of slavery is banished from the North.

THE HON. WM. D. KELLEY, in lecturing to-night, at Concert Hall, before the Social, Civil, and Statistical Association of the Colored People of Pennsylvania, has chosen a subject which is already forced upon the attention of the American people. His argument will be in favor of the axiom that the colored man who is fit to fight for the Union is fit to vote for it, and it is expected that his speech will be one of the finest of his life.

LETTER FROM "OCCASIONAL."

WASHINGTON, March 21, 1865.

The hardest winter in twenty years has just closed, and the floods of March, unprecedented in violence and their destruction of property, North and South, are fast subsiding. We shall now probably have better weather by land and sea for the approaching Southern campaign. Troops may be transported with comfort and safety; the blockade maintained with a firm hand and an unsleeping eye; captured railroads repaired and held; and the preparations for the finishing blow against the rebellion extended and perfected. The coming season in the South is the loveliest and most salubrious of the year. The experience of the Northerners who have sojourned in Charleston, Savannah, Augusta, New Orleans, Fernandina, Nashville, or Richmond, need hardly be referred to, where the fact itself is so universally familiar. The Government is alive to these palpable advantages, and will not be slow to seize and act upon them. And precisely as they appear to us, actually thrust into our hands as so many irresistible weapons of offence and vindication, so will they be regarded by the rebels as destructive of their hopes. The moral element next comes in to increase and strengthen the auxiliaries of nature and of art. For at no period since 1861 has patriotic devotion to the parent Government been so ripe and so rife at the South as at this moment, and never before has the rebellion been so rotten and so disgusting. And this moral element, be it remembered, does not permeate the mudsills, "the white trash" alone; it leavens the whole mass. The gentlemen of the South—rich people like Duncan of Natchez, Mr. Levert, formerly of Mobile, Mr. Aikin of South Carolina, (who has just freed and provided for eight hundred of his slaves,) and thousands like them—have never sympathized with the run-mad politicians who worshipped Calhoun, and yelled and shouted at the heels of Yancey, Rhett, Spratt, Dixon H. Lewis, and poor old James M. Mason of Virginia. In fact, the old Jackson men of the South, like the old Clay and Webster Whigs, always looked with contempt on this school of demagogues. Take a cursory glance at the field and you will realize the truth of this remark. Of the men of the Jackson school, A. J. Donelson, his adopted son, Vice President Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee, Jere. Clemens, of Alabama, H. S. Foote, of Mississippi, like their cotemporaries and friends not now in the South, F. P. Blair and Robert J. Walker, both confidants of Old Hickory—they are now the open and defiant foes of the rebellion. In Kentucky the Union cause is supported by thousands who rallied around the fortunes of Henry Clay, and in Virginia and North Carolina some of the staunchest supporters of the Government of our fathers have always belonged to the same school. I can remember, as if it were yesterday, the bitter hatred of these gentlemen to Calhoun and his set, while that dangerous and subtle Cataline was weaving his web of treason in Washington. Do you suppose they did not see at the first, as they keenly feel to-day, that these wicked traitors forced on the war, and forced thousands into the current of blood and death against their will? It is in such a juncture that citizens so influential and so committed are asked to consider the conditions of peace offered by President Lincoln. Here, and now, they will naturally contrast the standing and the repeated proffer of these conditions, with the confessions of failure and defeat by Davis, *even as he is clamoring for their substance to keep up the rebellion.* Lincoln says: "Come back, and you shall be forgiven; protected in all your rights but that of slavery, destroyed not by me, but by your own leaders. Come back, and your fields will blossom, and your coffers be filled by the aid of free labor and the reopening of the commerce of the world." But Davis says: "No! We must fight and starve on—even if I have to set free your slaves, or make a treaty with England or France against the Government I swore to defend with all my energies." It is this mighty element assisting and strengthening Mr. Lincoln that will render his policy irresistible and the resulting peace perpetual. OCCASIONAL.

CHESTNUT-STREET THEATRE.—Miss Laura Keene's four-act moral drama, "The Workmen of Philadelphia," is being performed with immense success at this theatre. The piece is well cast and the scenery is beautiful.

NORTH CAROLINA.

DETAILS OF THE EVACUATION OF KINSTON

THE ADVANTAGES GAINED AND THE CAPTURES MADE BY OUR FORCES.

A Change in Lee's Tactics Observable.

JOHNSTON, BRAGG, AND BEAUREGARD RETREATING ON RALEIGH.

GOLDSBORO TO BE ABANDONED WITHOUT A STRUGGLE.

THE WHOLE ARMY OF THE CONFEDERACY ONLY 121,000 STRONG.

Sherman Probably Already in Possession and his Advance on for Raleigh.

Our Special Correspondence from the Immediate Scene of Action—General Facts of Interest—Great Meeting at Wilmington, &c.

—James C. Warner.—

[Special Correspondence of The Press.]

KINSTON, N. C., March 16, 1865.

WHAT KINSTON USED TO BE AND IS.

On the north bank of the Neuse river, thirty-three miles by a direct route from Newbern, is a small village, numbering at this time about one thousand inhabitants. Before the commencement of the war it was a place of some importance, and its population was much larger. It dealt largely in lumber, and thousands of feet of North Carolina pine shipped from its port form to-day the floors of many fine Northern mansions. From this trade the merchants of Kinston reaped a liberal profit. Nor was lumber its only source of revenue. Corn and bacon also came freely to its market, and formed a profitable item in the business of the town. But when an intestine struggle commenced between the people of the South and their Government, the merchants of Kinston were among the first to experience its privations. They had no longer Northern customers, and their great article of commerce, lumber, was a drug in the market. "A change came over the spirit of their dream," and, seeing that no more money was to be made there, a large proportion of the inhabitants left Kinston. The prosperity of the place was at an end. Warehouses which had formerly teemed with wealth were abandoned entirely, or became hospitals for sick and wounded soldiers. Commerce was dead, and its lineaments were hid in dust and overgrown with moss, gave a cheerless aspect to the once lively town. Kinston once boasted a hotel quite large for such a small place. The war took custom from this hostelry, and it became a hospital. It was at this town that Foster fought and won a battle in 1862.

ITS STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE.

Of late Kinston has again grown important in a military aspect. Some days two weeks ago, General Lee is reported to have indicated Kinston as a point which *must be held at all hazards* by the Confederates. This expression was caused by the necessity of preventing an advance from Newbern upon Goldsboro.

Three days ago a change of Lee's programme was evinced, as the last of the rebel army marched out of the town, and went by rail westward. This army, which was one of the *élite* of the confederacy in allegiance to the stars and bars, now exhibits the star-spangled banner flying proudly from the headquarters of the Northern general commanding the Department of North Carolina.

EVACUATION OF THE TOWN.

On Saturday last the evacuation of the town was commenced, on Monday, as I have stated, it was completed.

Meantime, our army lay quietly upon the other side, having no means of getting across, except by a scow, which is not available to cross an army in the face of an enemy. Pontoons were needed, but they could not arrive until yesterday, when they were laid in a rather peculiar manner. The bottoms of the boats, over which the planks of a pontoon-bridge are laid, are usually invariably made of substantial boards. Upon this occasion they consisted simply of canvas. This was probably adopted because it was more easily carried than wood. The boats were moored in a very strong current. The Neuse, indeed, near Kinston, runs like a mill-race. When the canvas admitted water into the boat it was pumped out. So the bridge proved a strong and very useful one. It was built yesterday afternoon. The covering boats on construction some skirmishers passed over in a scow and occupied the town. During the afternoon most of the army also crossed over. General Carter's troops were the first to cross. A part of our forces marched through the town and encamped outside, while others established themselves in the deserted dwelling-houses. This morning General Schofield and his staff entered the town, and established his headquarters in a tasteful frame house near the entrance of the town.

THE REBEL FORCES.

Previous to our late advance, Kinston had been garrisoned by the 67th North Carolina Regiment, commanded by Col. Whitford. Recently he was reinforced by Hoke's division, from Wilmington, and a part of Hill's division. Their whole force is estimated at from twelve to fifteen thousand. It was commanded by the redoubtable Gen. Bragg, who has fairly won, if he has gained nothing else during the war, the title of the *éfangeur*. Executioner.

The rebels, knowing that immediate pursuit on our part was impracticable, departed leisurely, and took nearly everything of value with them. They left, however, on their inner line of fortifications, two dismounted guns, which fell into our possession. A large quantity of ammunition, which was found stowed away in a bomb-proof, was most valuable. Although left evidently, it had been made to explode this by a slow match, but they had failed.

A REBEL RAM AND ITS FATE.

In aid of the defence of Kinston the rebels had constructed a terrible creature called a ram. At White Hall, about ten miles above here, they were for months engaged in building her. Six months ago she was so far completed that she was launched and towed down to Kinston. Here she was thoroughly iron-plated, and otherwise put in a fancied condition to destroy numerous Yankee craft. But the fatality which has usually attended Southern enterprises of this nature rendered this ram as useless as the majority of her predecessors. It may be said, adapting a well-known saying in regard to culinary operations, of the rebel shipbuilding, that Providence sends timber, but his Satanic Majesty sends workmen. This ram was loaded with such a weight of metal that whenever the tide was low she invariably struck upon the bottom of the river, and when the tide was rising her machinery was too weak to enable her to stem the current and get down into deeper water. For the last two weeks she has been inextricably aground, and all the efforts of her crew to move her into a position of usefulness to the rebel cause have been futile. She lay some two or three miles down river, and when the evacuation of the town was determined upon it became necessary to destroy her that she might not fall into our hands. She was accordingly burned on Saturday last. Her remains are still visible, looking like an awkwardly-built house of iron. Her armament consisted of two sixty-four-pounder Parrott guns.

A REBEL CHANGE OF PLAN.

The evacuation of Kinston was caused, as was indicated in my previous despatches, by the threatening position of Gen. Sherman. It was a place capable of long and persistent defence, possessing many advantages in being surrounded by swamps and having a deep, swift river in front. It is hardly probable that the rebels can now make a stand at Goldsboro, for there they would be liable to simultaneous assaults from the advancing movements from the columns of Sherman and Schofield.

RALEIGH REPORTED TO BE BRAGG'S DESTINATION.

Indeed, the inhabitants of Kinston say that, from what they were enabled to gather from the rebel officers, their troops left this place direct for Raleigh, which is now indicated as the place for a future struggle. Perhaps the capital of North Carolina has been selected as the "last ditch" of the Confederacy. It would seem that, in permitting the junction of our two columns in Goldsboro, the rebels have thrown away their last chance, for no one believes that they can muster an army except Lee's to oppose Sherman and Schofield united, and Lee's army is fully occupied in attending to Grant and Sheridan.

GOLDSBORO DEEMED INDEFENSIBLE.

It is now considered by many that we shall march into Goldsboro when it suits us so to do without opposition. We can scarcely occupy it for some days, however, even if the rebels leave it, without a garrison, on account of the difficulty of transporting supplies, until the railroad is completed. The construction train is now busy in laying rails, about six miles from Kinston, but it has many obstacles to overcome before it can complete its work to that point. Many of the bridges have been rebuilt, and the road on which they are to be laid is in many places muddy and swampy. The bridge, which is yet to be constructed, is a long one, extending not only over the Neuse river but across a long space of low and marshy ground. To build this bridge will occupy at least four days.

COUCH'S MARCH.

The march by which Gen. Couch joined our troops at Beaver Creek furnishes another instance of the rapidly accumulating evidence of the utter weakness of the rebel cause. With a force which, in the earlier days of the rebellion, could scarcely have moved unsupported over one-quarter of this distance of rebel soil, he marched without opposition, and at will, upon Wilmington, almost to Town, a distance overland of nearly one hundred miles. The troops left Wilmington on Saturday, the 4th inst., and reached their destination in a week's time, arriving on the 11th.

I learn from inhabitants that the prisoners which the rebels captured from us on the night were sent west, by railroad some time before the evacuation.

KINSTON'S DEFENCES.

The defences of Kinston consist of two very strong lines of earthworks. The outer line is constructed immediately on the bank of Southwest Creek, was palisaded and ditched, and swept the road leading to the town with four guns. It would have been very difficult to take this position by assault, as on each side of the road was a huge swamp, which would probably have rendered futile all attempts at flanking these fortifications. The inner line is even stronger than the outer, and is built upon the river bank only a short distance of the town.

THE INHABITANTS REMAIN IN THE TOWN.

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