

Special Vigilance by the People is the Price of Absolute Liberty.—Andrew Jackson.

The Case of Kniga Bone.

Acting Ensign Bone, about whom there has been so much gossip of late, we learn from a seaman attached to the United States steamer Michigan, is still confined on board that vessel, though he is not kept in irons as is generally reported. He is not restricted to any part of the ship, and is on deck every day. No persons outside of the boat's crew are permitted to converse with him, and several applications of parties living in the city have been denied. We have been unable to ascertain the official charges against him. His arrest is the result of the naval court of inquiry held here some weeks ago, but what information they elicited, or what special complaint they have brought against him, is kept mysteriously concealed from the public.

Kniga Bone is one of those superlatively "loyal" men who have endorsed the administration from I to Ivars, including its system of arbitrary arrests. No person in the city has rejoiced more over the imprisonment of Democrats without legal charge or trial than he, and he has often been heard to express a regret that the Federal officials had not been more harsh in their measures towards those whose only crime (?) was an honest difference of opinion or questions of national policy! He is now taking the same medicine he has been pleased to see administered to others, and we cannot refrain from a curious desire to know whether it is as agreeable to his palate as when doled out to political enemies! "Curses, like chickens, come home to roost," and we commend this case to our Republican friends as one that is worth pondering over and profiting by. History is full of instances where those who have appaured acts of injustice and cruelty, have themselves been made the victims of the very system which they were instrumental in defending and establishing.

We do not want to be misunderstood, however. It is a birthright of every American citizen that he is entitled to a speedy, impartial trial. We have claimed this for Democrats, and we shall insist upon it for all, high and low, rich and poor, conservative and radical. Ensign Bone is a political enemy, but we trust we shall never be guilty of permitting a partisan difference to cause us to lose sight of great principles. If guilty of the offenses which public opinion charges him with, he deserves the severest punishment; if innocent, he should not be held under arrest a moment longer; and whether guilty or innocent, he is entitled to a prompt, fair trial in the manner pointed out by the Constitution and laws of the land.

Peace Missions.

There are now two peace missions from the North to Richmond.—Mr. F. P. Blair, of Maryland, and Gen. J. W. Sigsbee, of Illinois. Neither of these, according to the New York Tribune, which we take to be reliable authority on the question, is in any respect a representative of the administration, but both have gone on their personal account, to see for themselves what the revolutionary leaders will accept, having first obtained the consent of our government. We are free to express our belief that no important results will attend their efforts. The Northern people, by re-electing Mr. Lincoln, cut off the only hope that was left of obtaining an honorable peace by negotiation, and now the only termination of the conflict that is to be had lies through the terrible ordeal of the battle field. So long as either Abraham Lincoln remains at the head of the United States Government, or Jefferson Davis at the head of the Confederates, there is no chance of obtaining a cessation of the war, for neither will make propositions of peace which the other is likely to accept. The masses of the people on both sides have no hostility to each other, and if they could have the opportunity, and were left to their sober impulses for a single month before the expiring of that period they would put an end to this bloody struggle, on terms that would do no discredit to any portion of our own country.

—Since the above was put in type, Mr. Blair has returned from Richmond, and is now the "tip of the day" at Washington. His "mission" has been as barren as we anticipated. The correspondent of the World writes: "This evening Mr. Blair, Sr., and his son Montgomery, late Postmaster General, called on President Lincoln, and spent some time. What passed at the interview is as yet unknown, but it is believed that Mr. Blair has insisted on a very decidedly that he went on no official mission, and that he did not receive a verbal or semi-official communication while in Richmond."

The Paper Duty.

The paper monopolists, says the Harrisburg Patriot, have assembled in force at Washington and are making strenuous exertions to prevent the repeal of the duty on paper. Certain New England members who are interested in paper mills are also working in opposition to the repeal. Several New York newspapers have, it is said, secured contracts for paper at twenty cents, and are now engaged also in endeavoring to retain the duty, in order to break down the country press. Not only the printing interest but the reading public in general are interested in the repeal of the duty, and the member of Congress who votes against the repeal must ever be looked upon with suspicion for so flagrantly opposing cheap books and newspapers, and consequently of placing a check on the spread of useful knowledge of every kind among the people.

Kelley, of the Connecticut Reporter, is responsible for the following:

As a lady was trading in one of our stores the other day, the salesman in expatiating upon the good qualities of the Elliptic skirt, told her it was the best "wear nothing else." The lady thought the temperature of the atmosphere behind the store, but concluded to try one.

WAR NEWS OF THE WEEK.

(Philadelphia Age's summary.)

A resolution has been passed by the United States Senate ordering the Committee on the Conduct of the War to be at once an investigation of the Wilmington disaster. General Butler was relieved from command at the request of Gen. Grant, who, on January 16th, telegraphed the President that he wished Butler's removal. After a consultation with Gen. Halleck and Assistant Secretary of War Dana, the order was issued which sent Butler to Lowell, Mass.

From all the various reports it seems that General Hood, in the recent campaign in front of Nashville, and on his retreat, lost about seventy-five hundred men killed, wounded and captured, and fifty pieces of artillery. General Thomas reports that Hood crossed to the south bank of the Tennessee in safety at Florence, on December 26th. Hood, on his advance against Nashville, captured 1,700 Federal prisoners.

At Charleston the Confederates have captured two Federal barges with twenty-five prisoners. They ventured too near Fort Sumpter.

For a week past all sorts of stories have been circulated of the dissatisfaction of the people of Georgia with the Southern Confederacy and their anxiety to return to the Union. Reports were made of town meetings and resolutions being passed denouncing the Confederacy. All these stories originated with the Savannah Republican, which, like all disloyal journals suddenly converted to Administration principles, is noted for but one thing—a remarkable facility for falsehood. As the journal referred to has suddenly become silent on the subject, and even the deserters from Richmond say nothing about the supposed dissatisfaction, we presume that this last story has had its run, and we will hear nothing more about it.

The obstructions in the Savannah river below the city having been removed, an extensive trade has begun, and many steamers and sail vessels go from Port Royal with supplies and forage. The river has not yet been opened to general trade, but an order to that effect is expected at an early date.

The principal war news on Monday morning was a report from the Navy Department of a raid by the South Atlantic blacking squad upon some Georgia salt works. The raiders destroyed twenty-two kettles and two pans, and brought off thirty negroes as trophies.

There is little news from southern sources. The only item of importance is that General Sherman's advance upon Charleston has not yet captured Grahamsville. His troops are concentrated between Port Royal and Hardeeville, but have not yet advanced further than New River, fifteen miles from Grahamsville.

The capture of Beverly, Va., by the Confederates is confirmed. They made prisoners of the garrison of four hundred men.

Francis P. Blair, Sr., has gone on a peace mission to Richmond. Week before last, in company with Montgomery Blair, his son, he went down to Grant's headquarters in front of Petersburg. He had passes and full powers from the President, which were sent by flag of truce into the Confederate lines and forwarded to Richmond. After waiting four days at Grant's headquarters, Mr. Blair, despairing of receiving any reply from Richmond, returned to Washington. Scarcely had he left the camp when the reply came, and it was at once dispatched by special messenger after them to Washington. It contained passes admitting him into the Confederate lines, and on Saturday last, Mr. Blair again left Washington, reaching the camp on Sunday, and there being no obstacle he no doubt went to Richmond on Monday.

General Butler has been removed from command. The War Order No. 1, series of 1865, orders him to give up the command of Norfolk, Fortress Monroe, the north bank of the James, and the Dutch Gap canal, forthwith, and proceed to Lowell, in the state of Massachusetts, and report for further orders. General Ord has been appointed Butler's successor. Wilmington and the Dutch Gap canal caused his removal, which no one will regret.

General Sherman's advance guard is slowly moving from the Savannah river towards Charleston. A large part of the Federal army has been transferred from Savannah to Port Royal, and whilst one column moves north from Hardeeville, which place was evacuated by the Confederates on Thursday last, another is marching from Hilton Head. Both columns are moving towards Grahamsville, thirty-four miles north of Savannah. They march along the roads between the sea coast and the railroad, and the Confederates gradually retreat before them, making but feeble opposition. On Friday last New River was crossed, and the Federal advance was fifteen miles south of Grahamsville. Wheeler's cavalry were immediately in front of Sherman's troops. There is a report that on Sunday Grahamsville was occupied. It is seventy miles southwest of Charleston.

General Thomas, after marching south to Pulaski, Tennessee, suddenly cut loose from Nashville as a base, went to the Tennessee river, and, turning eastward, marched up toward Chattanooga. His object is unknown, nor has he been heard from since January 4th. Gen. Hood has made a report of the battle of Nashville. He says he lost fifty pieces of cannon, but that his loss in killed and wounded was small. He says nothing about prisoners. Hood's army is now distributed at various points from Florence, Alabama, westward to Corinth, Miss. He is guarding the northern parts of those States.

Gen. Price has not been killed and has not died. Nothing has happened to him. The jury in the Weed-Opyke case stated that they could not agree. They were divided between six cents damages and some other sum. Nine of them were for six cents damages. That any of the "loyal" parties to this case were damaged in character to even that insignificant sum, the Harrisburg Patriot thinks, is extremely doubtful.

An Important Local Question.

It suits in equity has been entered in the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania by William M. Meredith, Attorney General, against the Atlantic & Great Western railroad company, to test the question whether the company has not violated and, in consequence, lost its charter. The grounds of the proceeding are as follows: That by the act of incorporation the company, then called the "Meadville railroad company," have the right to construct a railroad from Meadville to the city of Erie, by the best route or by connection with any other railroad in the county of Erie, and, also, to one or more coal fields in the county of Mercer. The company were required to make equal connections and afford equal facilities to the Philadelphia & Erie railroad as it makes with and affords to any other railroad. The company were further empowered to connect with any railroad running to or from Warren or Mercer counties. The Attorney General claims that before the incorporation of the Atlantic & Great Western company, in 1857, the gauge of the Philadelphia & Erie railroad had been fixed at four feet eight and one-half inches, and that the Philadelphia road had been partly constructed, and that the A. & G. W. railroad company in constructing its road of a wider gauge has violated its charter by thus discriminating against Pennsylvania roads, and in favor of the roads of New York and Ohio; that the A. & G. W. company has not built its road from Meadville to the city of Erie, but has constructed and now operates a road from New York through Warren, Erie, Crawford and Mercer counties to the Ohio line, and at the State line has connected and is operating with roads of the States of New York. That the same company without authority or franchise is constructing roads to Franklin and Oil City, and from the State line of Ohio to and down the Shenango river and French Creek. It has long been manifest that the object of the A. & G. W. railroad was simply an extension of the New York & Erie railroad through Pennsylvania; and it appears that without any chartered rights for this purpose they have carried out their intent regardless of the main features of their charter, which was the making of the road from Meadville to the city of Erie. This is very properly resisted by the Attorney General of the State, backed by the recommendation of the Governor in his message. This high-handed disregard of the rights and interests of the city of Erie, as guarded by the charter of the A. & G. W. road, will, it is hoped, be properly rebuked by a decree of the Supreme Court; and, it is also hoped, in the mean time, no supine indifference of the citizens of Erie or their representatives will give color to any supposition that we are uninterested in the issue. We have already suffered quite enough for the benefit of neighboring States and cities to make it worth while to preserve the remains of such advantages as our locality naturally should afford us.

Oil on the Brain.

A correspondent of the Cincinnati Commercial, writing from Parkersburg, Va., gives the following description of the oil oil-pervading mania in that locality: "If you want to be bored, come to the oil region. Here's the place where you bore and get bored. It is nothing but oil from morning till night—oil on paper—boiled oil—people talk, write, sleep and snore oil. Ask a man how far it is to Charleston: 'Twenty-six miles, from Slabside's oil spring.' 'What time does the steamer leave for Wheeling?' 'As soon as Slabside's oil is loaded.' 'What was the fight about, yesterday?' 'Oil.' Jenkins married an oil well yesterday—or just as good—married Miss Snifkins, whose father struck oil a few days ago. Snifkins hadn't time to go to his wife's funeral last Tuesday—his 'oil' would run over. Preschers preach about oil being poured upon the troubled waters, and say this is the very spot where the oil for that occasion comes from. I slept on four barrels of oil last night—very hot. The entire country looks greasy, people here oily (oily), and your oil factory nerves are strongly impressed with the terrible stench. Everybody has territory for sale and there are plenty of 'wells and their money' who anticipate the realization of the Baron Munchausen stories that are afloat. Every sharper has a map of the region, and can tell a stranger exactly where the richest spots are—he has been there, knows the place, but is short of funds—has no personal interest in the matter, not he, indeed. But in mere matter of friendship advises you to buy there, and then do what he is doing—bore and oil must come. Non seem crazy victims are plenty. Seeking to become suddenly rich, many a tolerably well-to-do but over-ambitious individual goes his pile, and loses all he has, and sneaks off. A few strike it and become millionaires. Not one in a hundred but get their fingers terribly burned. A Few Words to Skaters.

The word "skate" was imported from Holland, where the skaat, as the Dutch call it, is almost a necessity in winter. In many places there they have canals instead of roads, and when these are frozen, market men and women, with their loads of vegetables, merchants transporting their business, boys and girls going to school, and almost all foot passengers glide swiftly along on skates. It is probable that the Dutch first learned the art from their more northern neighbors of Norway and Sweden, where the first skates were made of the shins bones of the deer or sheep, bound upon the foot with strips of skin. This must have been hundreds of years ago, as mention is made of skates in one of the oldest Soudaniana poems. In Northern Europe there is less snow than in this country, and skating is a universally popular amusement. In this country it has recently become fashionable for both sexes and all ages to skate, and ponds for this purpose have been prepared near most of our large villages and cities. We have seen engravers, lawyers, doctors and their families enjoying this recreation, and all agree that when properly indulged in it is most healthful as well as pleasant exercise. It has its dangers, however, against which our young readers especially should guard. Skating should not be allowed to interfere with school work or study. Teachers always say they dread smooth ice and pleasant weather. Lessons are neglected, and the minds of their pupils go off skating during school hours; and not a few mothers have had reason to complain that their daughters found the skating pond too attractive for the performance of home duties. Some care is needed to prevent injury to health from

penalve, the bit alone costing \$7,000; and we were informed by the gentlemanly superintendent of the mine, that the diamond is made out of set diamonds. It is a French invention. The people at Oil City did not seem to know anything of it, and looked incredulous when I told them; it has already, at a small depth, taken out a piece of stone eighteen inches long, attached to an iron shaft, weighing eight hundred pounds, fastened to a cable; the pump usually used is a lifting pump; the compression of the air passing through it makes the pipe so hot that it cannot be touched. The method of boring at present is with an instrument like a chisel, drawn up by machinery, and draws up the sand and dirt.

We progressed to the Empire well. This well, which burns its own gas—a very important desideratum, as coal for engines costs \$20 per ton, and the gas at the Empire well costs \$150 per ton; it produces 150 barrels per day, worth, at Oil City, \$11 50 per barrel. Upon this farm also is the celebrated Funk well. At last we reached Petroleum Center, a flourishing little town supported by oil, and after a comfortable nap in our clothes, 4 1/2 miles on a chisel, we upon this farm are some of the richest flowing wells—the Jersey well, 350 barrels, and the Coquette, struck a few weeks ago by the Maple Shade Company, which produced at first 1,500, now 600 barrels per day. Continuing our journey we had one strike of oil, which had failed during the night, we passed the Storey farm, Blood and Rynd farms, and the Phillips' well, producing 100 barrels per day, and came to the McIntock or Johnnie Steele farm, upon which a well was being struck which was 400 feet deep with a first run producing 250 barrels a day. Mr. Steele is about 20 years old, and has an income of \$2,000 to \$3,000 per day. At last we arrived at Rousseville, the mouth of Cherry run. We here saw another well burning its own gas, the apparatus is all very primitive. At this point we had a strike of oil, which had failed during the night, we passed the Storey farm, Blood and Rynd farms, and the Phillips' well, producing 100 barrels per day, and came to the McIntock or Johnnie Steele farm, upon which a well was being struck which was 400 feet deep with a first run producing 250 barrels a day. Mr. Steele is about 20 years old, and has an income of \$2,000 to \$3,000 per day. 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