THE MARYLAND NEWS SHEET.

VOL. I---NO. 75. BALTIMORE, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1861. PRICE TWO CENTS.

SEE FOURTH PAGE.

BOARD OF TRADE.

Committee of Arbitration for month of December.

WM. H. GRAHAM.
CHAS. BULLING, | A. CLOSE,
G. T. HOPKINS, | J. CORTLAN, JR.

Monetary and Commercial Review.

BALTIMORE, December 16, 1861.

There was very little done in Stocks here to day, the only sale made at the Board being one of $823 Baltimore 6's 1875 at 86, this figure being the same as was bid for them at the close on Saturday. The market was however unsettled and generally lower. Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, which left off on Saturday at $46 bid, $50 asked, closed to-day at only $43 bid, $48¾ asked, and for Northern Central Railway no bid was made. Railroad bonds were from 1 to 2 per cent. lower, Baltimore and Ohio 1867's closing at only 80 bid; 1875's at 74 bid; 1880's at 73 bid; and Northern Central 1885's at 60 bid, 61 asked. Maryland and Baltimore City 6's were both quite firm, the former closing at 91 bid for 1870's, and the latter at 86 bid, 86¾ asked for 1875's, dividend on, 82 bid, 83 asked for 1886's, and 85¾ bid, 87 asked for 1890's ex dividend. There were but few Bank stocks offering but the demand for them was limited and no sales were made. Baltimore Gas Co. was inquired for and $100 was bid for it, but none was offered. Springfield Mining was pretty firm, the market for it closing as on Saturday at $1.80 bid, $1.90 asked regular way.

In New York to day there was a panic in the stock market caused by the foreign news. At the first board *Virginia 6's fell off* 2 per cent.; Missouri 6's 3¾; Tennessee 6's 3¾; North Carolina 6's 3¾; Canton ¾; Erie 5¾; Erie preferred $6¾; Galena and Chicago $4; New York Central $4¾; and Reading $3. At the second board there was a further decline of ¾ in Erie; and $1 in Reading; but Missouri 6's advanced ¾; Tennessee 6's ¾; and New York Central ¾.

SALES AT THE BALTIMORE STOCK BOARD.

MONDAY, December 16, 1861.

$823 Baltimore 6's 75.. 86

PRICES AND SALES OF STOCKS IN NEW YORK, BY TELEGRAPH.

Through William Fisher & Son, Stock and Bill Brokers. No. 22 South street.

	1st Board	2d Board.
Virginia 6's.....	45	00
Missouri 6's.....	37¾	38
Tennessee bonds.....	49¾	49¾
North Carolina bonds.....	55	00
Canton Company.....	9¾	00
Erie Railroad.....	26¾	25¾
New York Central Railroad	78¾	76¾
Reading Railroad.....	31	30¾
Treasury notes 2 years 6 per cents..	00	00
	heavy.	steady.

The following are the official trade tables of New York for the week and since January 1:

IMPORTS.

	1859.	1860.	1861.
For the week.	$488,045	$669,917	$704,158
Dry goods.....	2,313,445	1 347,068	1,836,852
General merchandise.			
Total for the week...	$2,930,490	2,316,985	2,541,010
Previously reported.	224,648,227	216,641,372	116 652,561
Since January 1....	$227,448,717	218,958,337	119,193,571

EXPORTS OF PRODUCE AND MERCHANDISE.

	1859.	1860.	1861.
For the week.....	$1,666 969	2,147,413	3,404,955
Previously reported..	16,912,733	92,357,716	124,517,273
Since January 1....	$63,579,692	94,665,129	127,922,228

EXPORTS OF SPECIE.

	1859.	1860.	1861.
For the week.....	$673 223	71,000	none.
Previously reported.	63,305,930	42,563,737	3,256,885
Since January 1....	$63,979,153	42,634,737	3,256,885

The *Herald* says:

The imports for last week, for the first time for many months, show an increase over those of the corresponding week of last year. The heaviest item of import was guns, of which $251,000 worth were received; after this, tea, coffee, sugar, hides and hemp were the leading articles. It will not be our interest to increase at present, and, if they show a tendency to do so, Congress should raise the duties on all articles of luxury which can be dispensed with by our people. The exports of produce continue very large, and we understand that the receipts of produce by rail are so large that there is no reason to apprehend any falling off in the export movement at present.

BALTIMORE MARKETS.

MONDAY, December 16

COFFEE.—There has been no movement in Coffee to-day so far as we have heard, but the market for it is still very firm in tone. We quote as follows, viz: Rio at 18¾@19¾ cts. net for fair to prime; Laguayra, 19¾@20 cts. net; and Java at 24@25 cts. net. The stock of Rio here is about 15 000 bags, but there is little or no Laguayra or Java Coffee in market.

FLOUR.—There was but little done in Flour this morning, and the market for it was rather unsettled. A sale was reported on 'Change of 200 bbls. Howard Street Extra at $5 87½, which is a decline of ¾, but we heard also of sales of 300 bbls. Ohio Extra at $6, 100 bbls. do. cut Extra at $5.62½, and 150 bbls. Howard Street do. Extra at $5.75 per bbl. Nothing was done in Super, but it was held generally at $5 62½ for Howard Street, $5.50@5.62½ for Ohio, and $5.25@5.37½ per bbl. for City Mills. Extra closed at $6 for Ohio and Howard Street, and $6.25 @6.50 per bbl. for City Mills.

FAMILY FLOUR.—Family Flour is still selling by the dray load to the trade at $8.25 for the best brands Baltimore, $8 50@7 for Ohio and Howard Street, and Baltimore high grade Extra is bringing $7.75 per bbl.

RYE FLOUR AND CORN MEAL.—Rye Flour is firm at $4.37½@4 50, and we quote Corn Meal steady $3.20@3.25 per bbl. for both Baltimore and Brandywine.

GRAIN.—The receipts of Grain were heavy to-day, amounting in the aggregate to upwards of 100,000 bushels. Wheat was rather dull but prices were pretty well maintained. There were about 25,000 bushels received, and it was partly sold at 130@136 cts. for good to prime red, 110 @115 cts. for common white, 125@130 cts. for fair do., 140@145 cts. for good do., and 150@155 cts. for prime and choice do. Corn was however active. The receipts were larger than on any previous day this season, amounting to about 62,000 bushels, but the greater part of the receipts were sold at 65¾@66 cts. for new white, 70@73 cts. for old do., 58@62 cts. for new yellow, and 65@66 cts. for old do., these figures being about the same as were obtained on Saturday. Rye was in fair request and sales were made of 1,400 bushels Maryland at 65@68 cts., and 200 bushels do. at 60@70 cts. Oats, of which there were some 20 000 bushels at market, sold at 40@42 cts. for Maryland, and 45 cts. for Pennsylvania. They were however rather dull.

MOLASSES.—We notice a sale to-day of 50 bbls. New Orleans Molasses at 50 cts. net cash, but we hear of nothing doing in other descriptions. We quote as follows, viz: Cuba at 23@25 cts. for tart clayed, 28@32 cts. for sweet do., and 35@25 cts. for Muscovado; English Island at 32@40 cts.; Porto Rico at 34@44 cts.; and New Orleans at 55@56 cts per gallon four months.

PROVISIONS.—Provisions remain quiet, and quotations are in a great degree nominal. There is a little inquiry for Bacon, but it is selling only in small lots. We quote as follows, viz: Shoulders at 4½@4¾ cts., Sides at 5¾@5¾ cts., and Hams at from 6 to 10 cts. per lb. There is no Bulk Meat selling and we can give no quotations for it. Lard may be quoted at 8¾@9 cts. for City and Western. We notice a sale to-day of 100 bbls. Western Leaf at 9 cts. Baltimore packed Beef is selling at $12@12.50 for No. 1, and $16 per bbl. for Mess, and we quote Western Mess at $12@13 50 per bbl. Mess Pork ranges in price at from $12 to $13.50 per bbl., as in quality, and we quote Prime do. at $10@11, and Rump do. at $8@9 per bbl.

RICE.—There is a little Rice here, and it is held firmly at 7¾ cts. net. There is however very little demand for it.

SALT.—Liverpool Salt is in fair demand, and steady at the following rates, viz: 105@110 cts. for Ground Alum, and 155@160 cts. per sack for Marshall's, Worthington's and Jeffrey & Darcy's fine. Turks Island do. is still selling from store at 25 cts. per bushel.

SEEDS.—Grass Seeds are quiet and the market for them is rather heavy. We quote Clover as ranging from $4 37½ to $4.75, the latter figure being however only obtainable for some lots, and Timothy at $2@2.25 per bushel. Flaxseed is still bringing $1.60@1.75 per bushel.

SUGARS.—We hear of no movement to-day in Sugars. The market although quiet is however very firm in tone, and holders are not disposed to press sales. We quote as follows, viz: Cuba at $8@8.25 for refining, and $8.50@9.25 for grocery grades; English Island at $8@8.50; Porto Rico and New Orleans at $8.50@9.75; and Manilla and Pernambuco at $6@8.25.

REFINED SUGARS.—For Refined Sugars the rates are still as follows, viz: 11¾@11¾ cts. for loaf, 11@11¾ cts. for crushed, powdered and granulated; 10¾@10¾ cts. for soft crushed white; and 9¾@10 cts. per lb. for C yellow.

WHISKEY.—Whiskey is in good demand and firmer. We note sales to-day of 50 bbls. Ohio at 22 cts., and of 150 bbls. do. at 22¾ cts., and we quote both City and Ohio as closing firm at the latter figure.

DOMESTIC MARKETS.

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 14.—Flour firm—sales of 4,000 bbls. at $5 87½@5 50. Wheat firm—sales of 5,000 bushels at $1 40@1.41 for red; white $1 48@1.50. Corn active—yellow 65 cts. Oats 41 cts. Lard 9 cts. Rio Coffee 17 @17¾ cts. Whiskey 20@20¼ cts.

CHICAGO, Dec. 14.—Flour firm. Wheat advanced ¾ cts.—sales at 72@73¾ cts. for No. 1, and 66@66¾ cts. for No 2, in store. Corn firm and inactive at 21¾ cts. for mixed, in store. Oats quiet. Receipts 6,870 bbls. flour, 2,600 bushels wheat, 13,000 bushels corn.

IMPORTS INTO BALTIMORE.

FOREIGN.

DOMINICA—*Schr. N. M. Forster.*—63 hhds. sugar, 9 trcs. sugar, 174 bbls. sugar, 23 punch. molasses, 7 punch. rum, 100 bags cocoa, R. & H. R. Tucker.

BREMEN—*Bremen ship Adolphine.*—1,000 bags mdse., 1 case mdse., 6 cases wine, F. L. Brauns & Co.; 9 baskets mineral water, Lurmann & Co.; 4 bbls. potatoes, H. F. Alberti & Co.; 4 baskets do, Beck & Bachman; 1 case mdse., H. Brunner; 2 cases do., 3 bbls. potatoes, 1,000 demijohns, Geyer & Wilkins; 1,700 do. do., Von Kapff & Arens; 2 pkgs. mdse., Stehman, Hinrichs & Co.; 2 do. do., 3 do. potatoes, Wm. Wilkins & Co.

LIVERPOOL—*Bremen ship Admiral.*—7,500 sacks salt, Schaer & Kohler.

ACUTAPULTA—*Br. schr. Edwin.*—1,404 bushels salt, R. & H. R. Tucker.

COASTWISE.

NEW YORK—*Schr. Ann D. Newton.*—70 tons coal, Gas Co.; 1 hhd. figs, 50 boxes fire crackers, Wm. Bridges & Son; 5 cases handles, 97 bales wick, 10 bbls. do., 2 bbls. baskets, 21 bbls. sieves, 245 bales twine, 787 reams paper, C. W. Lord; 12 cases wine, M. Sauerwein; 32 cases matches, G. Chipman; 90 boxes pipes, B. F. Parlett & Co.; 200 bales hay, G. W. Williams; 10 bbls. mackerel, 50 empty kitts, 121 bbls. apples, 50 bags onions, 6 bbls. port, order.

NEW YORK—*Schr. C. A. Crook.*—50 bags onions, L. Jones & Co.; 211 bbls. apples, R. T. Walsh; 100 bbls. cement, J. M. Leisted; 1,808 bars iron, J. J. Abrahams & Baker, Bros. & Co.; 25 pkgs. wine, C. H. Rose & Co.; 6 tons coal, Baltimore Gas Co.; 15 bedsteads, R. R. Agt.; 20 bbls. peas, 40 boxes wine, Noedel & Co.; 12 bbls. barley, Thomsen & Block; 285 bales hay, A. Wharton.

NEW YORK—*Schr. R. H. Vermilyea.*—1,000 sacks salt, order.

NEW YORK—*Schr. Sarah Lavinia.*—50 bales chairs, Hiss & Austin; 150 bbls. syrup, H. Withington; 4 bbls broom handles, L. M. Beebe; 555 bags phosphate of lime, Ellis & Cairns; 307 bales hay, A. Waltman; 75 tons iron, order.

BOSTON—*Bark Sylph.*—50 bbls. mackerel, R. R. Grif fith; 550 bbls. do., W. D. Shurts & Co.; 185 do. do., J. B. Eastman; 59 pkgs. mdse., Mills, Mayhew & Co.; 23 do. do., Pendexter, Alden & Co.; 15 casks oil, 400 pkgs. furniture, 100 do. tin, order.

BOSTON—*Schr. John R. Myers.*—525 pkgs. fish, W. D. Shurts & Co.; 81 bbls. herring, T. R. Matthews & Sons; 41 bales hemp, J. G. Ramsey; 296 pkgs. mdse., Boehm, Rice & Co.; 25 do. do., Baker, Bros. & co.; 16 do. do., A. L. Huggins; 10 do. do., E. Dupre; 10 do. do., T. M. Harvey; 42 do. do., R. F. Brown & Co.; 4 do. do., Campbell & Son; 200 do. do., 175 bbls. apples, 12 houses, order.

BOSTON—*Schr. Richard Vaux.*—101 hhds. sugar, Hyland & Wooda; 30 do. do., Levering & Co.; 92 bars iron, 200 pkgs. fish, 800 do. vegetables, 100 bbls excelsior, 100 bbls. apples, order.

LATEST NEWS.

TELEGRAMS.

FROM WASHINGTON.

Effect of the English War News—How it was Received at Washington.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16.—The latest news from England has occasioned no marked excitement among public men, the indignant tone of the British press having been anticipated—hence the absence of expressions of surprise. As, pending disputes between the United States and Britain heretofore, the angry public voice has subsided to await the result of diplomatic formalities, so will it be again. The particulars of the claim by the British Government growing out of the removal of Slidell and Mason from the Trent having yet to be presented, the arguments in its support must become a question of controversy, and it is not unreasonable to assume that our Government will have at least equal advantage and skill in the discussion. When the British Government shall have made a formal demand for the restitution of the Confederate Ministers, the time will have arrived for such response as will show that, although we are engaged with insurgents, there is still integrity in the Government to furnish such a reply as will not be at variance with our heretofore amply sustained character of national independence.

The Diplomatic Corps seem to be more concerned in the important question at issue than our own civil functionaries. Questions are generally asked—What will be the result of the controversy, rather than the expression of individual opinion upon the subject.

As to the Administration, there is reason to believe that neither the President nor any member of the Cabinet will be diverted in the least degree from their present course of conducting the war.

The Wall street panic was telegraphed here to-day and excites much amusement in Administration circles. The falling of stocks in Wall street on newspaper reports of Cabinet councils in London are considered rather a matter of speculation than of wisdom. It is thought that stocks will rise to-morrow in New York.

The Administration is understood to be expecting possibly a war with the Navajoes, but it has not begun to think a war possible with either England or France.

Letter from a Federal Prisoner at Charleston.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16.—The following is a copy of a letter received by Colonel Matheson, of the 32d regiment New York State volunteers, from Ross A. Fish, captain of company E, 1st Cavalry regiment. Captain Fish is now a prisoner in the hands of the Confederates at Charleston, and it will be a matter of interest to know how the soldiers are faring in that section, while it shows the necessity of providing for an exchange of prisoners.

CHARLESTON, Dec. 1.—My dear Col.—Your letter of Oct. 14th was received Nov. 5th, since which I have not heard from any one. You intimated that you would send a lot of clothing and so forth. If you have I have not received it. I am sadly in want of clothing and of money, and am entirely at a loss how to direct you so that I may be relieved. The risk of not getting a box is so great that I advise you not to send one. I think if you would remit fifty or a hundred dollars to the commanding officer at Fortress Monroe he would be able to forward it with safety, if any one could. It is impossible to give a permanent address, as we are changed occasionally. We are now in Charleston jail.

Dear Colonel, the imprisonment is telling hard on us all. To-day we saw the last of Surgeon Griswold, of the 38th New York, Scott Life Guard. When disease takes one now, we have no vitality to shake it off. If our Government does not do something soon a higher court will settle our question. You know my cheerful spirits, but I am not the same. I worked hard to get up the 1st California regiment and love it dearly. It seems hard that my efforts are to be blotted out, and existence to be unknown, save to a few writing for our relatives.

Tell Senators Latham and McDougall and my friends, that the prisoners demand their eternal endeavors for their release. It is a shame that those who have labored and fought so well, should be permitted to die in a strange land, in a jail, carried to a lone grave, unacompanied by even a comrade soldier, there to rest unknown as well as unhonored. Please write to my sister or forward this. The opportunities of writing are so few and the chances of letters never reaching their destination, and the limits placed upon their contents by the authorities, forbid my writing to my beloved mother and dear sister; and, dearest L., I could not do so. They know my feelings and my undying devotion to my cause. I trust in God soon to be with you. I never hear from you, but I know the history of the 1st California regiment will be a good one. My love to Lieut. Brown and Company E, and all of the regiment, Lieut. Colonel Pinto, Major Lemon, Adjutant Purdy, Doctor Little, and others.

Direct my letters to Fort Monroe. Some may come by chance.

Poor Jim Potter, Major of the New York 38th regiment, with the rest of the field officers, are in solitary confinement, awaiting the punishment to privateers. The same fate awaits them. God be with you all. Yours ever,

[Signed] ROSS A. FISH,
Captain Company E, First California Regiment.

Settlement of the Boundary Question Between Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16.—In the United States Supreme Court the case of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, establishing the boundary line between them, was heard to-day—Hon. John H. Clifford and S. H. Phillips appearing for Massachusetts, and Messrs. Jenckes and Bradley for Rhode Island, and Attorney General Bates for the United States. After hearing the parties the Court passed a final decree establishing the boundary line as set out in the report of the engineers; the decree to take effect on the 1st of March, 1862. The controversy commenced as far back as 1730, and was submitted to commissioners in 1745, whose award was rejected by the King and Council. The question of boundary has been an open one, but is now settled forever. It is understood that Judge Black, of Pennsylvania, has been appointed Reporter of the Supreme Court. E. M. Stanton was not a candidate for the office.

Loyal Citizens—Fugitives from Texas.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16.—Franklin Chase, United States Consul at Tampico, informs the Secretary of State that that city is thronged with loyal United States citizens, fugitives from Texas, in great distress, some of whom he has relieved as far as his limited private means would allow. As Congress, however, makes no provision for the relief of destitute citizens in foreign countries unless they are in camp, the case of the fugitives mentioned by Mr. Chase appeals strongly to the sympathies of the charitably inclined at home.

Imprisonment of Slaves in the District of Columbia.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16.—A communication was to-day received by the Senate from Ward H. Lamon, Esq., Marshal of the District of Columbia, in answer to a resolution of that body requiring him to show by what authority he receives and retains slaves in the jail of this District. The reply of Colonel Lamon is in substance that the practice is acquiesced in by him on account of the universal custom, based upon some valid law into which he has made no investigation.

Passing the Blockade of the Potomac.

WASHINGTON, December 16.—The steamer Volunteer, belonging to Caleb S. Wright, of Philadelphia, was attacked by a Confederate battery five miles this side of Matthias Point several days ago. Twenty-seven shots were fired at the vessel, one of which struck the awning, and another passed through the timber and lodged inside. She arrived here last night.

Reconnoissance to Fairfax Court House.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16.—Six companies of Col. Avery's Cavalry, under command of Lieut. Col. Owens, proceeded to Fairfax Court House to-day, and went through the village in different directions. There were no indications of the enemy in that vicinity, excepting a few Confederate pickets, one of whom was killed.

Release of Dr. Leslie Lloyd.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16.—Dr. Leslie Lloyd, who was arrested at Vienna some weeks ago, charged with holding sympathizing intercourse with the Confederates, was soon thereafter released. He is a member of the Unconditional Union party of Alexandria.

The Trial of Col. Kerrigan.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16.—Nothing of especial interest took place to-day in the Kerrigan court-martial case.

Washington Items.

WASHINGTON, December 16.—A few days ago the House of Representatives passed a resolution calling on the Secretary of War to furnish information concerning the disaster at Ball's Bluff, but the General-in-Chief considers it would be injurious to the public service to transmit a reply at present in satisfaction of the request.

It appears from official documents that the number of seamen registered in the several ports of the Union during the year ending with September last was four thousand five hundred and seventeen, of whom one hundred and forty-seven were naturalized.

The War Department, in reply to a resolution of the House, says that Col. Lyndo is believed to be the only officer who was in any way involved in the suspicion of complicity in the offence of surrendering Fort Fillmore to an inferior force of Texans in July last, and that he has for that act been dismissed from the service.

Effect of the Foreign War News on the New York Markets.

NEW YORK, Dec. 16.—The *Express* says the excitement on 'Change to day in consequence of the war news was intense beyond description. Breadstuffs were favorably affected and all descriptions were very firm. Many lots of cotton were withdrawn from the market, and only a slim array of samples were on sale in the brokers' offices. Saltpetre advanced from 11 to 15 cts. per pound, and but few holders would name any price. Brimstone was kept out of market. Chemicals advanced also. Bicarbonate of soda advanced 1 cent. Coffee and teas were all withdrawn from market, or only offered at enormous prices. Sugars were offered sparingly. Sterling exchange bills advanced to 110.

Death of Chief Justice Swims.

HARTFORD, Dec. 15.—Chief Justice Swims, of this city, died at four o'clock this afternoon, aged eighty-four years. He has been remarkable for his strict integrity in public and private life, and for his active and effectual support of every good work.

New York Bank Statement.

NEW YORK, Dec. 16.—The weekly bank statement of our city banks shows the following decrease: Loans $2,146,000; specie, $2,883,000; circulation, $235,000; deposits, $4,239,000.

FROM THE UPPER POTOMAC.

A Picket Skirmish.

POINT OF ROCKS, Dec. 16.—Before daylight on Sunday a group attached to the pickets of the 28th Pennsylvania regiment, wanting to come over from the Virginia shore opposite Berlin, thirteen men of company N were sent over in a boat, when two companies of Confederates, in all about 120 strong, sprung from an ambush and surrounded them. Our men fought gallantly and cut their way through to their boat, while many of their comrades gathered on the opposite bank and caused the Confederates to retreat. The little band killed two of the enemy and wounded five; we had one wounded and two taken prisoners. The coolness of our men prevented their all being captured.

FROM FORTRESS MONROE.

Important from the South—Landing of General Butler's Expedition at Ship Island—Return of the Constitution for More Troops—No Further News from Charleston.

FORTRESS MONROE, December 15.—There was no flag of truce sent to Norfolk to day on account of the heavy wind.

The steamer Constitution, Captain A. F. Fletcher, arrived here this afternoon from Ship Island, Mississippi, on the Gulf of Mexico (about seventy-five miles from New Orleans), where she arrived on the 3d of December, with the 20th Massachusetts regiment and 9th Connecticut regiment, part of General Butler's expedition, which were heretofore reported as having gone to Port Royal. The troops were all landed next day, 4th instant, in the short space of four hours, by means of some Confederate steamers which had been conveniently captured by our fleet in the Gulf. After stopping at Ship Island four days the Constitution sailed for Key West and Havana. She remained at Havana two days, and thence proceeded to this port, where, after coaling, she will sail for Boston to-morrow evening, and, as is supposed, take on board three more regiments for the South.

The whole trip of the Constitution—from the time she left New York, on the 16th of November, and thence to Boston for the troops which she conveyed to the Gulf—has been accomplished in twenty-nine days. She carried eight hundred tons of freight in addition to the troops, and has thus proved a most valuable transport. She reports the weather as delightful during the entire trip. A steamer, doubtless the Spaulding from Port Royal, is coming up the bay.

Proclamation of General Phelps at Ship Island.

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 16.—Despatches received here relative to the news from Ship Island say that on the 5th inst. Brigadier General Phelps put forth a proclamation to the loyal citizens of the Southwest strongly anti-slavery in its tone.

FROM GENERAL BANKS' COLUMN.

FREDERICK, Dec. 15.—A complete telegraphic communication, exclusively for Government uses, now extends from Alexandria, Va., to Hagerstown, Md., including all the camps on the Virginia shore of the Potomac, the War Department, and the camps under Generals Banks and Stone's commands in Maryland. The superintending builder, Mr. P. S. Spring, goes hence to-morrow to Romney, to construct a line thence to Hagerstown. When completed, which will probably be in about two weeks, this will be the longest Government line in the country, being about two hundred and fifty miles in length, and will be worked on an undivided circuit.

Lieut. Rowley, formerly of the New York Twenty-eighth, but now detached as Division Superintendent of the military signal corps, is now convalescing from a serious billious attack. The duties of his position are being performed by Lieutenant Hartshorne, formerly of the Kane (Pa.) Rifle regiment.

Your correspondent has been placed in possession of some interesting intelligence from the Virginia side of the Potomac. From Harper's Ferry it is to the effect that the Confederates had constructed a bridge from the mainland to Herr's Island, in the Shenandoah, and brought off a locomotive, which they had previously disabled, and conveyed it to Winchester. It was reported that they had completed the new road from Winchester to Strasburg, connected with the Manassas road, but this statement may safely be doubted, as intelligence direct from Winchester ten days ago goes to show that up to that time the road had not even been graded.

From the same source it has been ascertained that the Confederates had considerably augmented their force at Martinsburg, probably by a contingent from Jackson's command. They had grown quite impudent of late along the river line, which gives a coloring of truth to the statement.

The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company commenced last Thursday reconstructing the bridge over Big Cacapon, which would be completed on the 16th. A reconnoitering force of workmen reported that there were no obstructions between that point and Hancock, and the track will probably be open by Wednesday from Cumberland to within sixteen miles west of Martinsburg.

The Confederate battery which a week ago opened upon Col. Leonard's picket, at dam No. 4, was composed of a section of Pendleton's Rockbridge Artillery, under command of Alburtis' Wise Artillery, from Martinsburg. The infantry force amounted to fully 700, a large part of which were concealed from our view. These were composed of Colonel Sincendiver's militia, and Nadenbush's Berkeley Guards. The cavalry consisted of Lehrain Jordan's corps, from Luray, and Captain Hoag's squadron, from Berkeley. Nadenbush's infantry were armed with altered flint lock muskets, with good bayonets. They were placed in ambush, in such a position as to cut off the retreat of Col. Leonard's force, should he attempt to cross the river to take the battery, the temporary abandonment of which by the Confederates was to induce him to do so.

On Monday Colonel Leonard quietly took two guns up to old Fort Frederick, above dam No. 5, in order to give the force returning by railroad a raking. About nine o'clock A. M., the train was seen coming up, and when nearly opposite, about one mile and three-quarters distant, he opened fire upon it. The first shot had the effect of checking the train, and the two succeeding shots struck the right cylinder, causing the steam to escape in a great volume. The train, however, had no troops on board, but those in charge of the locomotive betook themselves to a secure place in the hot haste. It has been ascertained that the train was bound to Paxton's cut for railroad iron. The cut is about thirteen miles west of Martinsburg. The train was still standing on the track when the informant left.

Transportation of Troops South—Exchange of Prisoners.

BOSTON, Dec. 16.—Negotiations are being made with General Butler to transport the Maine 12th regiment to their destination.

The bark Island City is expected to leave to-morrow with three hundred and fifty Fort Warren prisoners for Fortress Monroe, where they will await an exchange.

Parson Brownlow Arrested for Treason by the Confederates.

BOWLING GREEN, Kentucky, Dec. 16.—The *Courier* says that Parson Brownlow was arrested for treason by the Confederate States Commissioner at Knoxville on the 6th, and committed to jail.

The Knoxville *Register* says that the rumor of an order from the Confederate War Department for Brownlow's safe-conduct North created an intense excitement.

Occupation of Portsmouth, N. C., by the Federal Troops.

LOUISVILLE, December 16.—The Raleigh (N. C.) *Standard*, of the 4th instant, learns from a reliable source that a Federal regiment had taken possession of Portsmouth, at Ocracoke Inlet, North Carolina, and that there are ten Yankee steamers in Pamlico Sound.

Arrival of the Glasgow.

NEW YORK, Dec. 16.—The steamer Glasgow arrived this evening from Liverpool. Her advices have been anticipated.

MARKETS BY TELEGRAPH.

NEW YORK, Dec. 16.—Cotton is unsettled and the market excited—sales at 56@60 cts. Flour is firm—sales of 17,000 bbls. Wheat is buoyant—sales of 223,000 bushels; Chicago spring $1.32@1.38; Milwaukie club $1.29@1.31; red $1.39@1.40; white $1.45@1.50. Lard is steady at 8¾@9¾ cts. Whiskey is steady at 22¾@21 cts. Sugar is firm at 8@8¾ cts.—sales of 1,000 bags Pernambuco at 7¾ cts. Coffee is quiet at 18 cts. Spirits Turpentine $1.37½@1.55. Rosin dull at $5.87½. Freights are unchanged.

From the Cincinnati Gazette, December 11.

McCLELLAN'S PLANS UNSATISFACTORY.

"The sound of mighty preparation has made the country patient, but it is impossible to conceal longer the situation of affairs. The season for successful operations is past, and it leaves the National Capital in a state of blockade, which has been deliberately established in the very face of our mighty reviews and of our naval power on the Potomac; a blockade as humiliating to the Government and as disgraceful to our military power as our blockade of the Southern coast is to the Confederates.

"It leaves the Confederate army in force in sight of Washington, and holding a line a hundred and fifty miles in length above and below the capital, with perfect impunity; a line which our gunboat navy has made but one attempt to disturb, and that resulted in another disaster but little less than that at Bull Run. And now Southern coast expeditions are undertaken, to satisfy the public expectation, sending troops at ten times the cost to repeat the Washington campaign by making themselves 'safe' at some point on the Southern coast, as if we could fight the enemy better on his own ground and a thousand miles away from our supplies, when we have him in reach, and have not the generalship to meet him anywhere on a border of a thousand miles, where we have our whole army, and on our own base of operations.

"It is with reluctance that we express our convictions on the real situation of affairs, but the delusion which has kept the deferred hopes of the people from sickening the heart, is too bare to be longer played. An attempt now to retrieve the loss of the season for active operations, would result in a terrible sacrifice of men, and peril the safety of the whole army. The coast expeditions are a waste of our resources to no important purpose. The way to carry on war, especially by the superior power, is to conquer the armies of the enemy. If we could not find them in force, there might be some sense in looking for them in remote places; but they are here facing us, and will be until they are attacked and defeated. We have an army whose numbers we recapitulate to astonish the world by its immensity and by the rapidity with which it was raised; and we have generalship which does astonish the world by its utter incapacity to plan any campaign of real active and important operations, or even to break the enemy's lines, which he extends without limit in the face of our immense concentrations, as if in undoubting confidence in our generalship."

WAR ITEMS.

Rumored Engagement Between the Iroquois and Sumter.

The bark Agnes, Capt. Thompson, which arrived at this port on Sunday from Rio de Janerio, reports that on the 10th instant, in lat. 35° N., long. 74° W., spoke the English brig Mary Morton, from St. Thomas bound to New York, the captain of which stated that the United States steamer Iroquois had a severe engagement with the Confederate steamer Sumter, and that one of the vessels (which one could not understand) had put into Martinique to repair damages.

FROM WASHINGTON.

From the Washington Star of Yesterday Afternoon.

NAVY YARD.

The only arrival since our last report is that of the Mount Washington, which went down on Saturday morning, returning that evening. Messrs. Hale, Clark, Edwards, Rice, of Mass., Rollins, of N. H., and others, went down on the Mount Washington, and after passing Stump Point the steamer was stopped, it not being deemed expedient to expose her to the enemy's fire, and the party took to the boats and proceeded to Budd's Ferry. Two shots were fired by the Confederates at the boats, but without effect, both going wide of their mark. It is thought the design of the enemy was not so much to injure the party as it was to draw the steamer down within range, to pick up the boats. The Mount Washington reports all quiet with the flotilla. In coming up she met the Hugh Jenkins, with a number of schooners and smaller vessels in tow.

GENERAL SUMNER.

The injury sustained by General Sumner on Saturday afternoon last, which yesterday gave rise to a prevalent rumor of his death, was by no means as serious as was first thought. He was riding at a rapid gait, when his horse stepped into a footing, and falling, fell heavily on him, jarring and bruising him greatly, but not so as to endanger his life. His condition has since been constantly improving. He is expected to be out again in two or three days.

Special Washington Despatches to the New York World.

MORE CONFEDERATE COMMISSIONERS.

Letters from the South, intercepted by the government, state that two agents of the Confederate government, to proceed to England and France, have been appointed, and are to reach their destination by way of Tampico. One is stated to be Beverly Tucker, Buchanan's defaulting consul to Liverpool.

THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATEERING.

It is understood that the government is in receipt of information fully confirming the report that the Mexican authorities intend issuing letters of marque and reprisal to prey on the commerce of Spain and France.

IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS.

A member of the court-martial that tried Johnson, says it came out on the trial that there are five or six other soldiers in Gen. Franklin's Division who enlisted for the purpose of deserting to the Confederates, and who are connected with female spies in Washington.

FIFTY SOLDIERS IN SUSPENSE.

There are still nearly fifty soldiers in custody who have been convicted of offences the punishment of which, by the articles of war, is death. They are mostly cases of sleeping on post. Their fate is undecided.

IMPUDENCE REWARDED.

Mr. Ellet's pamphlet, alleging mismanagement of the army of the Potomac, is being quietly suppressed. Even members of Congress find it difficult to procure a copy.

Special Washington Despatches to the New York Herald.

A GENERAL BANKRUPT LAW.

A special committee, of which the Hon. Roscoe Conkling is chairman, was raised at the July session, charged with the subject of a general bankrupt law, and there is good ground to expect favorable action upon it. Such a measure is called for from all parts of the country by the agricultural, commercial and manufacturing classes, and by both creditors and debtors, as being essential to the protection of the rights of the fair creditor and the relief of the honest debtor.

JUDGE BLACK ELECTED REPORTER OF THE SUPREME COURT.

Hon. Jeremiah S. Black, formerly Attorney-General, and last Secretary of State under the Buchanan administration, was yesterday elected by the judges Reporter for the United States Supreme Court, in place of Benjamin C. Howard, who resigned on account of his secession proclivities.

REVIEW OF TROOPS AT ANNAPOLIS.

The troops assembled in General Burnside's school of practice, at Annapolis, were reviewed at Annapolis yesterday, by Brigadier-General Foster, and made a fine appearance. Gen. Burnside has not yet joined his command.

Special Washington Despatches to the N. Y. Tribune.

A SHARP CONTRACTOR.

The Investigating Committee have recently had their attention called to the case of a Pennsylvanian who contracted to furnish the trans-Potomac camps with firewood at $4 per cord. It is said he procures the whole supply from trees already felled by Government, which he pays fifty cents a cord for cutting. It is then transported to the camps by Government wagons. The inventor of this little plan thus clears, if our information be correct, $3.50 a cord.

UNION PRISONERS.

The Confederates claim to have 3,900 prisoners, counting not a few citizens of the Southern States, who have remained true to the Union, and too many who they have picked up on outpost duty. From the begining they have shown much greater proficiency than we in the art of capturing small picket guards, or fractions of them, and it is said that their recent successes in the business in this vicinity have not been inconsiderable.

POSSIBLE RESTORATION OF GEN. SICKLES.

It is possible that Gen. Sickles may resign in consequence of the decision of the War Department that all officers of his brigade must be commissioned by Gov. Morgan.

THE POTOMAC.

Col. Browster came up river to-night. The Confederate batteries opened on him but did no damage.

Washington Despatches to the New York Times.

THE ARMS PURCHASED IN EUROPE.

The Government agents who have been buying arms in Europe have exceeded their authority to the amount of $100,000. The excuse is that they bought a large lot to prevent their falling into the hands of the Confederates. Secretary Cameron has instructed them to close their accounts, and cease buying. The total number of arms bought since the beginning of the war is about 200,000. Many of them are poor in quality, and all quite inferior to American-made guns. A proper encouragement of American gun-makers by making all future purchases of them, will unquestionably become the policy of our Government.

THE NEWS FROM EUROPE.

The despatches relative to the action of the British Government, which will appear in the New York journals of this morning, were received by the Government this afternoon. Notwithstanding the belligerent attitude assumed, there is no disposition on the part of any member of the Cabinet to alter the plans or policy of the Government assumed in the arrest of Mason and Slidell.

The report of the demand of the English Government for the surrender of Mason and Slidell causes great excitement as it extends through Washington, and is discussed on the streets and in the hotels. The sentiment of defiance is universal. It is proper to add that the better informed people keep entirely cool, and do not believe the news as to England's position to be at all reliable.

THE COMMAND AT PORT ROYAL.

Influential members of Congress have been asking the President to supersede Gen. Sherman in the command