THE MARYLAND NEWS SHEET.

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LATEST NEWS.

TELEGRAMS.

FROM WASHINGTON.

Duties on Tea, Coffee and Sugar.

WASHINGTON, January 4.—The following letter has been addressed to Hon. W. H. Fessenden, chairman of the Committee on Commerce, of the Senate, and Hon. Thaddeus Stevens, Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, of the House.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, January 3, 1861.

SIR: The act of Congress passed on the 20th of December, 1861, directing that from and after the date of its passage, certain duties, in lieu of duties before imposed, should be levied, collected and paid, on tea, coffee and sugar, imported from foreign countries, did not exempt from its operations tea, coffee and sugar imported and warehoused, and was, therefore, regarded by me as a direction to collect the duties prescribed on all such importations, without exception, and instructions were issued to the collectors accordingly.

I beg leave, however, to direct your attention to the fact that where goods imported have been placed in warehouse under the law and departmental regulations, the amount of dues has in each case been estimated, though not levied by the Naval Officer, and bond has been taken by the collector on both the amount of the dues thus estimated, for their payment, and there is a general opinion among merchants that the Government is engaged for the delivery of such goods to the merchants on payment of the duties imposed by law at the time of the warehousing. Whether this opinion be absolutely well founded or not, there is certainly something in the nature of the transaction which supports it. It is my duty doubtless, to execute the law as written, but I beg leave, in view of this opinion of the importing merchants, respectfully to suggest the propriety of the adoption of a joint resolution directing the Secretary of the Treasury to permit warehoused goods to be withdrawn on payment of the duties imposed by the Act of August 2d, 1861, and to refund any excess of duties above those imposed, which may have been collected on goods already withdrawn. With great respect,

Signed. S. P. CHASE,
Secretary of the Treasury.

The Proposed Texas Expedition.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5.—The report in a recently published letter from St. Louis, with reference to a Texas expedition being fitted out at Fort Leavenworth, to be under the charge of Major-General Hunter, with Generals Lane and Denver as subordinates, is incorrect. General Lane is at present engaged in the discharge of his duties as a Senator from Kansas.

He will leave this position only to take exclusive command over a column organized with a view to demonstrate to the country the correctness of those principles through which he believed the war can be brought to a successful close, and rebellion triumphantly and permanently overthrown. In this position, General Lane, it is understood, is cordially endorsed by the Administration.

Vice-President Hamlin and party returned at noon yesterday, from their visit to Harpers Ferry.

Gen. Fremont arrived here last night and has taken private quarters.

Deserters from the Confederate Army.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5.—Two deserters from the First Maryland regiment, and three from a Tennessee regiment, encamped near Union Mills and Centreville and Manassas, arrived here yesterday. They escaped by way of Winchester, crossing the Potomac at Dam No 5, eight miles above Williamsport. These men were well clothed. They have no idea of the number of our men, but represent the defences to be of a formidable character.

Iron-Clad Steam Batteries.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5.—The Navy Department has forwarded to the several navy yards copies of the specifications for the hull, iron-plating and steam machinery for the iron-clad steam batteries about to be built. Upon application to the commandants of the yards, parties who can prepare a portion or the whole can see the specifications, and will be able to make an offer to the Secretary of the Navy, stating the least time and money for which they can execute the work.

Measures Against Female Spies.

WASHINGTON, January 5.—Measures have been taken additionally to guard against the communication of information to the Confederates, especially through female agency.

Col Kerrigan a Traitor.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5.—Circumstances in the case of Col. Kerrigan have transpired within a few days past, which fix upon him, without doubt, the fact of his having furnished information to the enemy, as previously alleged.

Minister from Peru.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5.—Manuel Nicolas Corpancho, Minister from Peru, has arrived here, and will be presented to the President to-morrow.

FROM GEN. BANKS' DIVISION.

FREDERICK, January 3.—To-day General Banks and Staff, accompanied by their ladies, took a special train hence and joined the Vice President and family at the Junction. They proceeded thence to Sandy Hook. At the Point of Rocks a national salute was fired by Captain Knapp's battery, attached to Colonel Geary's command.—After reaching Sandy Hook, the party proceeded to Maryland Heights, where, on arriving at the battery they were entertained by an exhibition of shelling out a picket station, between Harper's Ferry and Bolivar, where the Union residents were stopped in their intercourse with each other. The party then returned to this city.

Report says that General Banks and lady will give weekly receptions during their stay here; that the spacious Institute for young ladies had been applied for for the purpose, and that, notwithstanding the consent of Mr. Winchester, the principal, the trustees declined to grant the use of the building for that purpose.

The great feature of to-day was the installation of the newly elected officers of Columbia Lodge, No. 58, of Free and Accepted Masons. A procession was formed at the Lodge, consisting of several hundred resident and visiting Masons, (the latter being composed principally of officers of all grades, and privates from the army) headed by the band of the Second Massachusetts. After passing through some of the principal streets, the body proceeded to the Lutheran Church, where the following officers were installed for the ensuing year:

George T. Willard, W. M; Herman C. Kohler, S. W.; Gideon Bantz, J. W; Henry Goldenberg, Secretary, and John B. Overton, Treasurer.

An eloquent and interesting Masonic address was delivered by Rev. Brother Quint, Chaplain of the Second Massachusetts.

The military telegraph has been completed to Romney with a branch to Williamsport. Messages have been sent from Cincinnati to Alexandria on a single circuit.

Refugees continue to arrive here from Virginia by way of Harper's Ferry, Williamsport and Hancock, and after a preliminary examination here are sent on to Washington. This morning a gentleman arrived here from the South with a large package of letters to various persons in the North, most of which were unobjectionable in their character.

Snow is falling merrily to-night, and many are rejoicing at the prospects of good sleighing to-morrow.

FROM KENTUCKY.

Partial Destruction of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad.

LOUISVILLE, Jan. 3.—The *Journal* has information that General Johnston's and Buckner's forces have torn up the Louisville and Nashville Railroad for three-fourths of a mile, about four or five miles beyond Green river, piled up the cross-ties, laid the rails upon them, and set fire to the whole mass; repeating the same operations at different distances all the way to Glasgow Junction, besides felling as many trees as possible across the track, and were engaged in blowing up the tunnel, which is about three hundred feet long, near the Junction.

FROM FORTRESS MONROE.

FORTRESS MONROE, Jan. 4.—The scouting party which went to Great Bethel yesterday morning from Camp Hamilton, was between seven and eight hundred strong, composed of six companies of the Coast Guard, six companies of the 20th New York regiment, and three companies of Harlan's Cavalry regiment, under command of Acting Brigadier General Weber, accompanied by Major Vegesack and Major Carling of General Weber's staff. At about two miles beyond Little Bethel the infantry halted, and the cavalry proceeded towards Big Bethel, and some six miles this side of that place met a mounted Confederate picket who was driven in. The cavalry gave chase, but were unable to overtake them.

On arriving at Big Bethel, the place appeared to have been deserted, and a careful examination showed that to be the case. It had apparently been occupied by three or four thousand troops, including two or three hundred cavalry. Breastworks were found nearly half a mile in extent, and pierced for twelve guns. After a short stay the scouting party returned. No guard was left there, as was stated in yesterday's letter.

The steamer S. R. Spaulding is loading for Hatteras Inlet.

The Burnside expedition is now daily expected here.

Arrival of the Steamer Northern Light with Treasure from California.

NEW YORK, January 3.—The steamer Northern Light arrived here this morning from Aspinwall. She brings $711,000 in treasure.

Five hundred bales of cotton *en route* for England had arrived at Panama from Peru, and a much larger amount was going thither *via* Cape Horn.—Efforts were making to raise a very large crop of cotton the ensuing year of superior quality. The British mail steamer Valparaiso got ashore at Paita, and was assisted off by the United States ship Wyoming, undamaged.

From Chili, accounts say that General Yanez was killed at La Paz, by the people, in revenge for the assassinations ordered by him during the month previous. In an attempted outbreak by Col. Baiza, one hundred persons were killed and he was badly wounded and finally took refuge with the United States Minister.

The Equadorian Government was preparing to repel an anticipated attack from Peru.

In the recent Peru election the Ministerial party were successful. In Bolivia there had been a resolution putting down President Acha and electing Senor Frederick. The people took no part in the election, the affair being consummated by the army. The Chilian Government have contracted with Henry Meiggs to complete the Valparaiso and Santiago Railroad.

Senatorial Nomination.

DETROIT, January 4.—The Republican caucus has nominated Jacob Howard for Senator in the place of Mr. Brigham.

The Steamer Parana.—Mason and Slidell.

HALIFAX, January 4.—There is no news of the steamer Parana, but all apprehensions in regard to her safety have subsided, from the fact that she did not leave Southampton till the 20th ult.

Mason and Slidell are hourly expected to arrive here in the British gunboat Rinaldo.

CITY INTELLIGENCE.

ARRIVAL OF FEDERAL PRISONERS.—On Saturday morning last there arrived by the Bay Line boat, 240 prisoners, who were confined at Richmond, and were exchanged for the same number of Confederate prisoners. There was a rumor on Friday last, that a grand reception would be given the prisoners on their arrival in this city. It was said that there would be a splendid military and civic demonstration, and during their stay in the city they would be the guests of the Union Relief Association; but the arrangements, whatever their character was, were impotently carried out. On the arrival of the boat, with the exception of a small police force, there were no persons there to receive them. They got off the boat, formed in line, and proceeded to the headquarters of the Union Relief Association, on Camden street near Howard, where they partook of breakfast. A number of them took the cars for Washington, for the purpose of gaining permission to visit their homes; others remained in the city, and a few proceeded on their way North. The prisoners generally, looked well, and were comfortably clad. Among them were a number of wounded, some of whom were yet suffering from their wounds. It is rumored that the Federal Government will send South all the Confederate prisoners in their possession, and a like number of Federal prisoners will be sent North.

HEAVY LOSS TO A BALTIMORE MANAGER.—Richmond papers received here on Saturday give an account of the destruction by fire of the theatre in that city, by which Mr. Kunkel, manager of the Front Street Theatre and Museum, lost $10,200, provided for us by his agent:—Wardrobe, $5,000; furniture, $1,700; scenery, $1,500; private papers and copy-righted plays, $700; oil paintings, $400; stage properties, $500; and a drop curtain painted by C. S. Getz, $400. The loss falls very heavily on Mr. Kunkel, who left Richmond on account of the present troublous times, and whose insurance expired in September last. The friends of the popular manager are about to tender him a complimentary benefit, which we hope may prove a perfect ovation to a meritorious manager.

A BRILLIANT METEOR.—On Saturday morning about fifteen minutes after seven o'clock a brilliant meteor was observed in the southern heavens. It rose in the east and passed across the heavens due west. It was observable for several moments, and in diameter appeared to be about one fourth that of the sun. It was light-red in color, and in its course threw off brilliant balls of fire. Just before sinking in the western horizon it appeared to burst. It was seen by a number of persons who were down the bay fishing, and several of the northern papers notice the fact of its being observed.

ICE.—There is now a prospect that our ice dealers will be able to lay in a supply of this great Summer luxury. The mild weather which prevailed up to the 1st inst., occasioned considerable alarm among the dealers, and fears were expressed that the usual home supply would not be obtained, but the cold spell now prevailing, should it continue a few days longer, will afford at least a partial supply. The dealers are well prepared, and are waiting patiently to gather the crop.

SKATING.—The last two or three days of cold weather has furnished fine skating, and the lovers of the sport are taking advantage of the opportunity offered, and on Saturday and yesterday the ponds and streams presented a lively scene. The pond in the Park was thronged with skaters on Saturday and yesterday—there were more than a hundred youths on the Back Basin. One or two nights such as Saturday night and the skating will be excellent.

SEVERE ACCIDENT.—Yesterday morning a boy named John Foodley, in company with a number of other boys, was sliding on the ice, when he slipped and fell, breaking his right leg above the ankle. He was taken to his home on Franklin street, near Stricker, where Dr. Mahon set the limb. Two other boys who were on the ice quarrelled and a fight ensued, when one of them was thrown violent to the ice, and scattered a fracture of his right collar bone.

AN INTELLECTUAL TREAT.—The citizens of Baltimore this evening have an opportunity of hearing a lecture from one of the most eloquent and distinguished pulpit orators of America—Rev. Francis L. Hawks, L.L.D., of New York. The lecture will be delivered at the New Assembly Rooms, at half past seven o'clock, and the proceeds of it will be devoted to the amelioration of the condition of the poor of this city—an object which of itself is sufficient to attract a large audience.

ACCIDENT.—On Friday evening an elderly man, named Hawkins, was quite severely injured by being run over by a furniture wagon, at the corner of Bond and Fayette streets. He was in the act of crossing the street, when the driver of the wagon turned suddenly around, and before Mr. Hawkins could get out of the road he was knocked down and the vehicle passed over his legs, bruising them badly. He was taken to his home on Bond street, where he received medical attention.

FIRE.—Shortly before six o'clock on Saturday morning a fire broke out in the works of the Maryland and Virginia Coal Oil Works, located on the corner of West and Leadenhall streets, by which the property was damaged to the amount of $300. The loss is covered by insurance. The origin of the fire was purely accidental. This is the second fire that has occurred at this establishment within a few weeks.

HAND CRUSHED.—On Saturday afternoon a man named Benjamin Franklin was at work in the shipyard of Mr. Muller, repairing the engines of a steamer, and desiring to see whether the machinery would work put it in motion. His hand was caught in it and badly crushed. He was taken to the office of Dr. Evans, where the wound was dressed, and then to his home on Alice Anna street, near Ann street.

RELEASED ON PAROLE.—Mr. Laurence Sangston, of this city, member of the last Maryland Legislature, and who has been confined in Fort Warren for some time past as a political prisoner, reached here on Saturday morning, having been released for thirty days upon his parole of honor to return to Fort Warren at the expiration of that time.

INQUEST.—Yesterday about noon the body of a man was seen floating in the basin near Locust Point. It was taken to the Western police station, where Coroner Bartee held an inquest over it, and a verdict of "accidental drowning" was rendered. The body was not recognized. The man was apparently about fifty years of age.

CALENDAR.—James Lucas & Son, printers, Nos. 13 and 15 South Calvert street, have published, as is their custom, a calendar for the year. It is a tasteful and elegant piece of work. The selection of colors, their blending and general arrangement, cannot be surpassed.

MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL.—The members of both branches of the City Council will meet in regular session this afternoon, at 5 o'clock, in their respective chambers, at the old City Hall. It is expected that the annual message by Acting Mayor Baker, will be presented.

ELECTION AT THE CORN AND FLOUR EXCHANGE.—The annual election for fifteen directors to manage the affairs of the Corn and Flour Exchange for the ensuing year will take place to-day at the rooms of the Association. There are two tickets in the field and an animated contest is anticipated.

FOR COURT.—William Hagan was taken into custody for being drunk and disorderly, and resisting a policeman. He was arraigned before Justice Logan, who fined him $1 and cost, and released him on bail to answer at Court the charge of resisting the officer.

ASSAULTING A MAGISTRATE.—Joseph H. Edwards and Alfred Squier were yesterday arrested upon the charge of committing an assault upon Justice Isaac L. Boyd. They were committed to jail by Justice Showacre, in default of bail, to answer the charge at Court.

RUNAWAY SLAVE.—A negro man, named John Brice, was arrested on Friday night, upon the charge of being a fugitive. He was committed to jail to await the order of his owner, Mr. B. F. Clarke.

Amusements.

DEBUT OF SENORITA CUBAS—*Front Street Theatre.*—This evening has been set apart for the debut of this great artiste, at the Front Street Theatre. The previous announcement of this fact has already created a great excitement on the part of our citizens to witness her evolutions on the "light fantastic toe," and we are very much mistaken if the "Front" will not be tested to its utmost capacity, to see this fascinating danseuse. During a stay of four weeks in Philadelphia she nightly crowded the Opera House, and created the wildest excitement. Her claims as a great artiste in her art are said to have been equalled by no lady that has ever visited this country; and if she proves to be one-half as beautiful and artistic as the press of Philadelphia and Boston pronounce her, she will attract overflowing houses during her short stay with us. Her engagement is for six nights only; so we advise all to embrace the first opportunity and see her. Seats can be secured during the engagement at McCaffrey's Music Store, Baltimore street.

HOLLIDAY STREET THEATRE.—To-night Mr. Eddy makes his appearance at Holliday Street in the character of *Virginius*, with Mrs. I. B. Phillips as *Virginia*. It has been two years since the public have had an opportunity of witnessing Mr. Eddy, and his friends will no doubt give him a hearty welcome. Mrs. Phillips is a great favorite with our public, and deservedly so. Her personation of Virginia will no doubt be a fine piece of acting.

THE MUSEUM.—It will be seen that the manager of the Museum has secured from Barnum's Museum, New York, three of his great living curiosities, which will appear on exhibition in the saloon of the Museum, from 10 A. M. to 10 P. M., every day. These great living monsters, the walrus and sea lion, are among the wonders of creation, and will, no doubt, be visited by most of our citizens. The "What is It" attracted the greatest attention while on exhibition in New York, and will certainly do the same here. Let every person go and see the "What is It?"

BALTIMORE MUSEUM.—To-night the incomparable Kunkel's Troupe will present an entirely new programme, full of life and fun, containing among other laughable oddities, including the Anvil Chorus, an admirable burlesque on the grand scene from "Il Trovatore." For fun, the Museum is decidedly the place.

LATEST FROM THE SOUTH.

A Dashing Little Affair at Port Royal.

Correspondence of Charleston Courier.

I have seen no mention made of one of those dashing little affairs which occasionally show as much gallantry as the more stirring scenes of actual battle, and although it occurred ten days since I think it but right to mention it. A small party of the Beaufort Volunteer Artillery went over to Port Royal, armed with double-barrelled guns, burnt thirteen cotton houses and returned unharmed. Three of the party, including the captain, crossed to Paris Island in a canoe, burnt four hundred bales of cotton under the nose of the Yankees, and also one large corn house full of corn. The next night Col. Martin tried to finish the work and fell into an ambuscade, escaping luckily with a little scare and a big race; providentially sent, doubtless, to teach us that horses must be taught to stand fire as well by night as by day before they are carried on night attacks. They wounded one of our men slightly, and had two of their's shot in the neck and breast by one of our privates.

From the Richmond Despatch.

From the Northwest.

We have had the pleasure of an interview with Capt. Thompson, of the army of the Northwest, who is now in our city on his way to another field of duty. Capt. Thompson served with marked distinction in the late desperate battle of Alleghany, one of the hardest fought and most glorious Southern victories of the war. The loyal soldiers of the Northwest, in that fierce contest, nobly and gloriously redeemed the reputation of their section. We learn from Capt. Thompson that the enemy's best fighting regiment on that occasion was composed of recreant Virginians of the Northwest, fifteen of whose dead bodies were recognized by old acquaintances after the battle. The Ohio soldiers were soon disposed of, and a crack Indiana regiment was not much behind the Buckeyes in their Bull Run capacities, but the hostile Virginians held on like bull-dogs and did honor to their breed, if not to their principles. The defeat was a rout, completely demoralizing the enemy, who will not soon renew the attack, and would never have made it, but from the representations of deserters of the feebleness of our forces.

KENTUCKY.

From the Bowling Green Courier, Dec. 26.

Official Call of Gen. A. S. Johnston and Staff on Gov. George W. Johnson

We understand that a few days after the announcement of the admission of Kentucky as one of the Confederated States was authoritatively announced, General A. S. Johnston and staff, in full uniform, made an official call upon Governor G. W. Johnson, the Provisional Governor. The interview, as represented to us, was an exceedingly interesting one. Gen. Johnston made some brief and very happy remarks, in which he stated that, as the head of the military government, it was his duty and pleasure to recognize the Provisional Administration as the legitimate government of Kentucky, and the one that honestly and truly reflected the will and wishes of the people. Governor Johnson's reply to the General's congratulatory remarks was, like everything from him, in the best taste and spirit.

Trip of the Theodora.

From the Wilmington (N. C.) Journal.

The steamer Theodora left Charleston on the night of Thursday, Dec. 5th, 1861, bound for one of the West India Islands. The night was beautiful, the sea as smooth as glass; the only thing visible was a light to seaward supposed to be on board one of the blockaders. But Saturday morning told another tale—a dangerous storm was approaching, and soon burst over the vessel in all its fury. By six o'clock in the morning it blew with terrific violence from the northeast, wave after wave threatening to sink the Theodora; but the gallant little steamer bore it well. Occasionally a sea would sweep her little deck fore and aft. But our noble captain took her in charge and succeeded in making her lay easy. Unquestionably a better, cooler, or more persevering captain never trod the deck of a vessel. Through his perseverance and that of the engineer the steamer was brought into a port of safety.

The steamer commenced leaking awfully, and had nearly three feet water in the hold. Two steam pumps and all hands baling with buckets were unable to free her of the water, which kept gaining fast. At this critical moment the worthy engineer rushed immediately down to the fire room, and seeing that the pumps were not able to keep her afloat, cut the vacuum injection pipe, which was the saving of the boat and all hands on board, and the only resort to keep the boat from sinking.

By Sunday night the storm had increased to its highest pitch, but the boat did not make over a foot and a half of water, owing to the three pumps then working. On Sunday night she stove in her forward guards, and damaged the stern considerably. Boats were got ready and everything prepared to leave the vessel, if it became apparent that she would sink; but on Monday morning the gale moderated a little, which enabled the steamer to make some headway. This day at 11 o'clock made Inaguana, which filled every heart with joy. By 8 o'clock on Tuesday morning, the 10th inst., in Nassau harbor, in a sinking condition, looking more like a raft than the notorious Theodora, called by the Yankees "The Black Witch."

On Tuesday afternoon, December 17th, the Theodora weighed anchor and steamed for one of the Southern ports.

She had the best weather that could have been wished for. The run was made from land to land in fifty-five hours. Last night (night of Thursday the 19th) about 8 o'clock, passed a large steamer bound south. This morning (Friday, 20th) we had a pleasant little chase with one of Old Abe's fast steamers, but finding it was no go, he saluted us with three guns, but did not do the damage he calculated on—his shot falling about a mile short. The Captain of the Theodora returned the salute by giving the Absitc three blows of his whistle and dipping his flag.

The Theodora got up to town on Friday afternoon, and the above narrative has been in our possession ever since Saturday, but for the reasons stated, has not been published sooner; and never would have been published, but for the flourish made in Richmond over the arrival of Mr. Ex Consul Scott. The account was courteously furnished by an officer—neither captain nor engineer of the Theodora.

From the Richmond Enquirer, Jan 1.

Official Report of the Naval Fight Near Newport News.

[Extract from the report of Com. Lynch, to the Navy Department, of the recent Naval engagement near Newport News.]

The water being too low in the Chesapeake and Albemarle Canal for this vessel (the Sea Bird) to proceed to Roanoke Island, we last evening steamed down and anchored in the bight of Craney Island. This morning, a little before daylight, we weighed anchor and stood across to Newport News. About 7 30 A. M., an enemy's steamer passed out of James River with a schooner in tow, and steered for Fortress Monroe. We immediately gave chase, when she cut the schooner adrift and carried a heavy head of steam in order to get under the cover of numerous men-of-war lying off the Fortress.

We were fatt closing in with her, however, when the explosion of our second shell set her on fire. In the belief that her destruction was inevitable, knowing that her crew could be rescued by boats from the vessels not far distant from her, and it being unsafe for this vessel to approach her, we steered for and took the abandoned schooner in tow. In the meantime one large steamer from Newport News, and the Fortress, were making their way towards us, when an exciting scene took place—we endeavoring to carry the prize into port, and they making every effort to intercept, and by constant firing disable us. Many shells from the ships and the Fortress exploded quite near us, and four or five passed immediately over the deck. We succeeded in fighting our way through, with the prize in tow, without the slightest injury to either, and gratefully attribute our escape to something more than chance, or human agency. We knew that a large steamer was struck once and a smaller one twice, by our shot; the former was reported to be seriously injured. The prize is a large schooner, her hold coated with zinc and filled with water for Fortress Monroe.

Removal of Federal Prisoners.

COLUMBIA, S. S., January 1.—All the Yankee prisoners from Charleston, including Corcoran, arrived at Columbia this afternoon in a special train. They were met at the depot by a Confederate guard and conducted to the jail.

Colonel DeLagnel.

This popular and efficient officer took charge of the forces at Craney Island on Friday last. Those under him, we are informed, have already learned to love him, and we congratulate them on the acquisition of so perfect a gentleman and able officer.

Special Despatch to the Richmond Examiner.

Confederate Victory in South Carolina.

CHARLESTON, S. C., January 2.—Fighting on the coast commenced yesterday. Thirty-five hundred of the enemy landed on the main, near Port Royal Ferry. They were met with the bayonet by two regiments of our troops. The Yankees fled precipitately, throwing away their arms as they ran. They were driven into their boats. The howitzers on their boats opened fire on our troops, killing six and wounding twelve South Carolinians. The enemy's loss is about the same. To-day the enemy landed in much larger force, at the same place. General Gregg's brigade fell back a short distance to an eligible position. The pickets were skirmishing all day. The enemy design an attack on the railroad, and cannot avoid a battle.

DESPATCH TO THE PETERSBURG EXPRESS

AUGUSTA, Jan, 2d.—A private despatch from Pocotaligo, received here yesterday, says that the Federals attempted to advance from Port Royal Ferry, but were repulsed by the 14th South Carolina regiment. Colonel Jones states the Confederate loss to have been 15 killed and wounded. One Yankee was taken prisoner. It is reported here that a large fleet of Federal vessels was off Tybee yesterday.

Commenting on the above, the *Examiner* says:

The repulse of the enemy in South Carolina is a joyful earnest of the future. Although no official accounts have been received, yet we think it true news. The Northern troops, after long hesitancy, have made their first attempt at a march from the sea-coast towards the interior of the State, and have received their first rebuke. Whenever and wherever they repeat the experiment, it may safely be predicted that they will arrive at a similar result. The Northern people and Government anticipate great effects from the naval operations on the coast, because a part of the plan was a multiplied series of successful marches and subjugations throughout the Atlantic States.

They supposed that, having the ports, they would soon and easily have also the country commanded by the ports. To take possession of a harbor and a strip of wave-washed sand was not the design of their armada. Yet it will be found that these are all the prizes they will or can gain for an enormous expenditure. Wherever the water is deep enough for their large ships to get within range of the hasty and insufficient sea coast defences of the South, they can certainly batter them down and land their troops. But then will end their barren glory. Whenever they attempt to march a column into the land it will inevitably come to grief.

Failure of the Stone Blockade.

CHARLESTON, Jan. 2.—The steamship Ella Warley, formerly the Isabel, from Nassau, ran the blockade and arrived at Charleston at daylight this morning. She was chased and ineffectually shelled by the blockaders. She brings a valuable assorted cargo and passengers, including Mr. Bibble, formerly a delegate in the Virginia Legislature from the city of Norfolk. Mr. Bisbie is a bearer of important despatches from Mr. Yancey, and has started for Richmond.

Hostilities Renewed at Pensacola.

A despatch was received on yesterday afternoon, in the official quarters, from General Bragg, and dated on the 2d inst., in which he stated that Fort Pickens opened on a Confederate steamer on the day previous, and that the Confederate batteries replied, and firing from both sides continued all day. No vessels were engaged and no casualties occurred on our side. General Anderson was in command, as General Bragg was absent, but the latter returned very early on yesterday morning.—The Federals did not renew the attack yesterday, and our guns were silent.

From the Richmond Dispatch.

Letter from W. G. Brownlow---His Treatment.

We copy from the Nashville *Patriot* the following characteristic letter from Parson Brownlow:

KNOXVILLE JAIL, Dec. 20, 1861.

Editors of the Nashville Patriot:—In your issue of the 17th instant you say: "We learn that W. G. Brownlow, imprisoned at Knoxville, refuses to eat anything, *desiring to starve himself to death.*"

I have no doubt, Mr. Editor, that you have learned such things, but it is wonderful intelligence! And but for the fact that I did not wish to be understood as trying to commit suicide, I would not care to correct the erroneous statement. The truth in my case is that I have now been in jail two weeks, and I have eaten too much every day—my family, with the permission of Brigadier-General Carroll, furnishing me with three meals each day. But, in taking cold, and suffering from a sore throat, I could boast of usual health. As it is I claim to be the most cheerful of more than one hundred prisoners I found here on my arrival.

But, sir, I will now give you an additional item or so, which many of your readers will perusc with interest, if you are allowed to publish them. I left home about the 5th of November, with a view to collect some claims due my office for advertising, and to relieve the fears of my family, who were daily annoyed with the calls of drunken soldiers, calling before my house and flourishing their side-knives and pistols, and making threats of violence. The last week in November I received a letter from Brigadier General Carroll, inviting me to return, and promising me protection from personal violence. On the 6th of December I received a brief letter from Major-General Crittenden, inviting me to his headquarters in Knoxville, promising me passports into Kentucky and a military escort to conduct me safe. At the same time I was furnished with the copy of a letter to the Major-General from J. P. Benjamin, Secretary of War, advising him to give me passports and a safe conduct beyond the Confederate lines.

Supposing the head of the War Department and the Major-General commanding here to be acting in good faith, I reported myself in person, and accepted the offer of passports. I agreed to start on Saturday, and the General designated Captain Gillespie's company of cavalry for an escort.

But, on Friday evening, just before sundown, I was arrested for treason, founded on certain editorials in the Knoxville *Whig*, since June last, the warrant being signed by Commissioner Reynolds and Attorney Ramsey. I am, therefore, in jail—in close confinement—perfectly contented, and making no complaints against any one. I am waiting patiently to see which is the highest power, the War Department at Richmond, associated with the Major General in command here, or the Commissioner's Court for Knoxville! Nay, I am anxious to know whether the high authorities inviting me here were acting in good faith, or were only playing off a trick to have me incarcerated! I am not willing to believe that the representatives of a great Government, struggling for its independence, and having in charge the interests of twelve millions of people, intend to act in bad faith to me. The chivalrous people of the South, and all the journals, have denounced the high-handed measures of the United States Government in suspending the *habeas corpus* act, suppressing public journals, and incarcerating citizens upon *lettres de cachet*, and I will not allow myself to believe that the Confederate Government will resort to similar tricks.

I am, sir, very respectfully, &c.,

W. G. BROWNLOW.

A SEQUEL TO THE ABOVE—TRIAL OF BROWNLOW—HIS RELEASE—LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY OF WAR.

The Knoxville *Register* of 31st ult., contains the publication of incendiary articles against the Confederate Government, was called up in court on last Friday.

The Deputy Marshal, Fox, having been ordered to bring from jail W. G. Brownlow, reported that Brownlow was too unwell, as he represented himself, to appear at the court-house. Very few spectators were present. The Commissioner ordered the District Attorney to proceed; whereupon the District Attorney arose and read the following letter from Mr. Benjamin, Secretary of War at Richmond.

CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA,
WAR DEPARTMENT, RICHMOND, Dec. 22, 1861.

SIR: Your letters of the 17th and 19th instant have been received. In relation to Brownlow's case, the facts are simply these: Brownlow, being concealed somewhere in the mountains, made application to General Crittenden for protection against what he called a military mob or military tribunal, if he came to Knoxville, professing his willingness to undergo a civil trial, i. e., a trial before the civil court, as distinguished from court-martial; and, as I understand, Gen. Crittenden promised to protect him from any violence and from any trial before a military tribunal.

In the meantime, Mr. Baxter came here and represented that Brownlow, who was entirely beyond the power and to concealed that no one could get possession of his person, was willing to leave the country and go into exile to avoid any further trouble in East Tennessee, and proffered that Brownlow would come in and deliver himself up to be conveyed out of East Tennessee, if the Government would agree to let him do so and to protect him in his exit.

If Brownlow had been in our hands, we might not have accepted this proposition; but deeming it better to have him as an open enemy on the other side of the line than a secret enemy within the lines, authority was given to General Crittenden to assure him of protection across the border if he came into Knoxville.

It was not in our power, nor that of any one else, to prevent his being taken by process of law, and I confess it did not occur to me that any attempt would be made to take him out of the hands of the military authority. This has been done, however, and it is only regretted in one point of view—that is, color is given to the suspicion that Brownlow has been entrapped, and has given himself up under promise of protection which has not been firmly kept. General Crittenden feels sensitive on this point, and I share his feeling. Better than any, the most dangerous enemy, however criminal, should escape, than that the honor and good faith of the Government should be impugned or even suspected. General Crittenden gave his word only that Brownlow should not be tried by the court-martial, and I gave authority to promise him protection if he would surrender, to be conveyed across the border. We have both kept our words as far as was in our power, but every one must see that Brownlow would now be safe, and at large, if he had not supposed that his reliance on the promise made him would ensure his safe departure from East Tennessee.

Under all the circumstances, therefore, if Brownlow is exposed to harm from his arrest, I shall deem the honor of the Government so far compromised as to consider it my duty to urge on the President a pardon for any offence of which he may be found guilty; and I repeat the expression of my regret that he was prosecuted, however evident may be his guilt.

J. P. BENJAMIN,
Secretary of War.

J. C. RAMSEY, Esq.,
C. S. Dist. Att'y, Knoxville.

Upon the reading of the foregoing letter, the Attorney remarked that the arrest of Brownlow had been made after consultation with the military authorities, who had given assurances that if Brownlow should be arrested by civil process, that the military would in no manner interfere in his behalf, except to protect him from personal violence; that this arrest had been made because of the following and similar articles which had been published in Brownlow's paper:

"Let the railroads on which Union citizens of East Tennessee are conveyed to Montgomery in irons, be eternally and hopelessly destroyed! Let the property of the men concerned be consumed, and let their lives pay the forfeit, and the names will be given!"

District Attorney Ramsey then proceeded to say that he would enter a *nolle prosequi* only upon the ground that the good faith of the Confederate States Government should be carried out in this case, and Brownlow be transported beyond our lines. This he did that no imputation whatever should be made against the authorities at Richmond of bad faith, no matter what might be the circumstances which led the authorities to such a conclusion. For himself, he believed that Brownlow could have been arrested, but as a different impression prevailed at Richmond and the authorities acted upon that, from the information they had, he could not do otherwise than enter a *nolle prosequi*.

Judge Reynolds, having heard the letter of the Secretary of War, remarked that, under the circumstances, he could not hesitate as to the discharge of Brownlow, and so ordered.

THE INDIGNATION AT HIS DISCHARGE.

The Knoxville *Register* adds.—

The indignation of the soldiers here, upon hearing of his release, we understand to have been intense. What may follow we cannot conjecture, though we presume the military authorities will see that he is protected and transported beyond our lines, where he will be able to co-operate with Johnson and Maynard.

Whether Brownlow was well enough to leave the jail last night, or what has become of him, we have not learned, though we understand it was the intention of the commander of the post here to hold him under arrest, with a view to his safe conduct beyond our lines.

Destruction of the Richmond Theatre and other Buildings by Fire—Great Loss of Property.

The performance given at the Richmond Theatre on Wednesday night was destined, as subsequent events have proved, to be the last ever given in that "Temple of the Muses."

At four o'clock yesterday morning, just as the bell announced the hour, the theatre was discovered to be on fire in sundry places, and hardly before the astonished members of the Fire Brigade could draw a long breath, the flames burst forth from the building, casting a lurid glare over the sky, illuminating the whole city.

Up to a very late hour on Wednesday night, as we learn, there were no traces of fire in the building, and as it burst out, when it did make its appearance, from every conceivable spot, and burnt, from the combustible nature of the building, with the rapidity of thought, the inference is that the author of the mischief knew his business and performed it with a master's hand. In two hours' time nothing but the fragments of two of the massive walls of the theatre remained to tell the passer what it once was. We have seldom seen the "fire god" more energetic in the performance of his duties. If anything was saved we did not learn the fact, and therefore suppose that not only the building but all of its adjuncts in the way of scenery, decorations, wardrobe, manuscripts, old plays, costly furniture and pictures, went also by the board.

We confess to a feeling of regret at this untoward calamity, for however much the building may have been at times of late perverted from its original design as a place for the representation of the "legitimate drama," it was a land-mark of other days, whose summary abolishment we witnessed with no pleasurable feelings.

The large brick building next to the theatre, occupied by David A. Brown as a saddle shop for many years, was set on fire and consumed, together with the kitchen and out-houses appurtenant thereto. The upper part was occupied by Mrs. Jackson as a manufacturing shop. Both occupants lost heavily. The building was owned by Mrs. Rawlings, widow of the late James Rawlings, and, we believe, insured for $4,500.

The adjoining tenement, occupied by William H. Davidson, well known as the Marshall Hotel to all citizens of bibulous tendencies, was next fired by means of the rafters, which extended through and through the two buildings. The Marshall Hotel, though not entirely destroyed, the first story and a portion of the second remaining, was rendered entirely worthless and unfit for occupancy. The kitchen and other buildings attached to it were entirely consumed. The hotel was owned by J. M. Lyneman, and insured in the Mutual Office for $4,500. Davidson's loss is about $2,700.

N. W. Nelson, a tailor, who occupies the third house from the theatre, lost $500 by the burning of his kitchen, and about $250 in goods carried off by *chevaliers d'industrie*, who undertook to help him save his stock.

The heat from the burning buildings was intense and the livid sparks were carried as far as the basin. A number of dwellings in the rear of the theatre, owing to the high wind, were in imminent danger of total destruction.

The houses on Grace street, between Seventh and Eighth streets, occupied by Messrs. J. M. Lindsay and Thomas Lawson, were set on fire by sparks falling on the roofs. The furniture was moved out of both. The roof of Mr. Lawson's dwelling was nearly burned off, and that gentleman, who was lying ill at the time, had to be removed on a cot to Dr. Bolton's residence.

Owing to the exertions of the firemen, all houses, save those in immediate proximity to the theatre, were kept from burning. Two brick buildings on Seventh street, opposite the theatre, occupied as whiskey shops, were saved by the timely exertions of those having the steam fire-engine in tow.

The fire was undoubtedly the work of design, and originated in the theatre. The latter was owned at the time of the catastrophe by Mrs Elizabeth Magill, and insured