THE MARYLAND NEWS SHEET.

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WAR AND OTHER NEWS.

In the Senate of the United States, a bill was introduced releasing the Government of all obligations to support slavery, and of all responsibility for it under the Constitution. The remainder of the session was occupied with the consideration of the Tax bill.

In the House of Representatives, the Confiscation bill, as modified by the Select Committee to which it was referred, was taken up and passed.

General Banks telegraphed to the War Department yesterday, from Williamsport, Maryland, that it was his belief that his whole force, trains and all, would cross the Potomac in safety. The men were said to be in fine spirits and were crossing in good order. He states, however, that the labors of the previous night were fearful, but that the enemy who followed on the march of the troops had not made his appearance yesterday morning. The supposed advance of the Confederates upon Harper's Ferry is not confirmed by the telegram from that place.

The details connected with the loss of the 1st Maryland regiment are given elsewhere as furnished by Captain George Smith to the *Baltimore American*.

By a special despatch to the New York *Tribune*, dated at Fredericksburg, May 24, (Saturday) it is announced that the Confederates had, in all probability, abandoned their position some few miles south of that town, and had retreated in the direction of Richmond. It was ascertained from "two loyal blacks" that there were but two companies of Confederate cavalry at Spotsylvania Court House, and it was the general impression in McDowell's command that the route was perfectly clear to the Confederate capital. The same correspondent reports a marked change in the sentiment of the people of Fredericksburg; "no insults being now offered to the soldiers as they pass through the streets. Even the ladies bend their necks to walk beneath the stars and stripes, and express in every feature a chastened and contrite spirit." A conversion so remarkable is eminently worthy of being recorded. On the same day, President Lincoln, accompanied by Secretary Stanton and Captain Dahlgren, visited Fredericksburg. The party, attended by Generals McDowell and Patrick, with a suitable body-guard, rode through the city, and a national salute was fired from one of the batteries at Falmouth.

From before Corinth we learn that a reconnoitering party, from General Pope's command routed three Confederate regiments in a skirmish, killed and wounded many, and took six prisoners.

General Burnside has caused the Commissioners of the town of Edenton, North Carolina, to be arrested, and has had them conveyed to his headquarters at Newbern, in retaliation for the arrest of a Mr. White, a pilot, who, after serving in the Burnside expedition, was surprised and captured by the Confederates. One of the Commissioners taken by Burnside was to be sent to Raleigh to demand the release of Mr. White, whom the Confederates had threatened to hang.

The correspondent of the New York *World*, writing from the gunboat flotilla off Fort Wright, states that the mortar firing over Craighead Point has been abandoned, and that the Confederate rams, which did so much damage to the Federal gunboats Cincinnati and Mound City in the recent naval engagement, are now to be met with similar rams, six of which have already arrived. They are described as "simply powerful Pittsburg towboats, whose engines have been enclosed in a thick wall of oak timber; the pilot house being cased in boiler-plate, and the forward part of the hull packed solid with bolted timber. An iron prow projects in front, which is expected to split open any vessel that it strikes." The naval officers do not regard these rams with much favor.

Governor Andrew, of Massachusetts, has issued a proclamation more in accordance with the emergency and directed of the negrophilism which characterized his letter to Secretary Stanton.—The Governor notifies the men of Massachusetts that the Confederates have attacked and routed Major-General Banks, and were advancing on Harper's Ferry and marching on Washington.—Under these circumstances he states that, in response to the call of the President to rise once more for the rescue and defence of the capital, the whole active militia will be summoned to report on Boston Common to-day. "They will march," adds the Governor, "to relieve and avenge their brethren and friends, and to oppose with fiery zeal and courageous patriotism the progress of the foe."

The latest telegram from Boston states that the call of Governor Andrew has met with an enthusiastic response, regiments—battalions and companies rapidly arriving at Boston from all parts of the State.

The 5th New York volunteer artillery and the 7th regiment of New York State militia, have been ordered by Governor Morgan to proceed to Washington at once. Five other regiments, four from New York and one from Albany, will follow, it is said, without delay.

By the arrival at Cape Race of the steamer Kangaroo, we have advices from Europe to the 15th inst. The news of the fall of New Orleans had been received in England, and was generally credited, though with some doubt. It was spoken of as a decided triumph for the North; but many contended that it would not materially affect the issue.

From Fremont's division Colonel Latham reports that he surprised and routed a large band of guerillas, capturing most of their arms. The pursuit was to be continued until the band was entirely broken up.

The Paris correspondent of the London *Times* attributes M. Mercier's journey to Richmond to instructions received directly from the Emperor; but, in a subsequent letter, gives another version, but without pretending to affirm its accuracy. In this latter account M. Mercier's mission is said to have been undertaken at the instance of Mr. Seward and with the consent of Napoleon III. Some persons conjectured that the South had made overtures for an arrangement, and that M. Mercier went to Richmond to treat with the Confederate authorities. Others, however, reject this theory, and declare, with more probability, that his object was to make himself personally acquainted with the state of affairs, and to ascertain, with his own eyes and ears, whether there was any hope of re-establishing the Union.

The London and Paris journals still continue their speculations in regard to the particular object of M. Mercier's visit to Richmond. The Paris *Constitutionnel*, whilst professing to be ignorant of the purpose of that excursion, is willing to hope that the adverse parties may listen to words of conciliation and peace. "If these words are uttered and listened to," says the *Constitutionnel*, "it will cause great joy to all feeling hearts in Europe, and particularly in France."

SPEECH OF HON. MR. WOOD.—In consequence of the great demand for the *News Sheet* containing the speech recently delivered in Congress by the Hon. Benjamin Wood, of New York, we re-publish it this morning on our fourth page.

THE OPERA.

Miss Kellogg makes to-night her debut in Baltimore in *La Figlia del Regimento*, sustaining the role of *Marie*. This lady has won for herself a great reputation in New York and Boston, and comes to us endorsed by the musical critics of these cities as a painstaking and accomplished artiste. She will be sustained by Signors Brignoli and Susini, and the instrumental department will be superintended by that accomplished director, Muzio. In addition, M. Gottschalk, a very deserved pet in this city, will favor us, between the acts, with some of his delightful piano-forte playing, which, of itself, is an inducement sufficient to draw a crowded house.

The opera is so well known to our readers as scarcely to require description, but it may not be amiss to remind them that it contains some beautiful morceaux for soprano and tenor, in which Miss Kellogg and Brignoli will appear to great advantage, while the deep-toned Susini will give to perfection the part of *Sulpizio, the Sergeant*, which, we are satisfied, he will render admirably, both as an actor and a singer. The political excitement, consequent upon recent events, having now in a great degree subsided, we may look for a full attendance, of which the plethoric appearance of the box-sheet gives full promise. The sale will continue to-day at Miller & Beacham's.

Special Washington Despatch to the New York Herald.

THE DISASTER TO GEN. BANKS—NECESSITY FOR MORE RAILROADS.

The city has been filled with exciting rumors all day. Intense indignation has been expressed at the loss of the splendid Valley of the Shenandoah, and the sacrifice of General Banks, who had recovered it, and imprecations are everywhere vented upon the author of the disaster. Telegraphic communication with Winchester having been interrupted, nothing has been heard from Gen. Banks since morning. The most energetic measures have been adopted to repair this great loss, and not only to check the further advance of the Confederates towards upon Harper's Ferry, but to punish them effectually for their boldness.

LATEST NEWS.

TELEGRAMS.

THE LATEST FROM GEN. BANKS.

Safe Arrival of His Army at Williamsport.

WASHINGTON, May 26, Midnight.—The following was received at the War Department at 11 o'clock to-night:

WILLIAMSPORT, May 26, 4 o'clock, P. M.

To the President:

I have the honor to report the safe arrival of my command at this place last evening at 10 o'clock, and the passage of the 5th corps across the river to-day, with comparatively but little loss.

The loss of men killed, wounded and missing, in the different combats in which my command has participated since the march from Strasburg on the morning of the 24th instant, I am unable now to report, but I have great gratification in being able to state that, although severe, it is much less than might have been anticipated considering the very great disparity of the forces engaged, and the long matured plans of the enemy, which aimed at nothing less than the entire capture of our force. A detailed statement will be forwarded as soon as possible.

My command encountered the enemy in a constant succession of attacks and in well contested engagements at Strasburg, Middletown, Newtown and at a point also between the so called Buffs and Winchester. The force of the enemy was estimated at from 15,000 to 20,000 men, with a very strong artillery and cavalry supports. My own forces consisted of two Brigades, less than 4,000 strong all told, including fifteen hundred cavalry, the Parrott guns and six smooth bores.

The substantial preservation of the entire supplies is a source of gratification. It numbered about 500 wagons. We had a forced march of 53 miles, 35 of which were performed in one day, subject to constant attack in front and rear and flank by the enemy in full force. Notwithstanding the panics of teamsters and the mischances of a river passage of more than three hundred yards, with slender preparations for food and forage, the train lost not more than fifty wagons.

A full statement of this loss will be procured forthwith. Very great commendation is due to Capt. S. B. Holabird, A. Q. M., and Capt E. G. Beckwith, for the safety of the train.

Our troops are in good spirits, and occupy both sides of the river.

[Signed] N. P. BANKS, Major-General Commanding.

All Safe at Harper's Ferry.

OFFICE ASSOCIATED PRESS, BALTIMORE, MAY 26.

A despatch from an agent of the Associated Press, dated Harper's Ferry, this morning, en route for Williamsport, makes no mention of any signs of the enemy in that locality. Hence it may be inferred that the many exciting rumors of the morning in reference to the enemy having reached that point are incorrect. We also learn that the telegraph is in operation along the whole line to Cumberland.

FROM ARKANSAS.

Confederate Accounts of the Condition of Affairs.

PITTMAN'S FERRY, MO., May 24.—The following extracts and despatches are taken from the Arkansas papers:

LITTLE ROCK, MAY 14.—The following orders have been received by telegraph:

To BRIG. GEN. ROANE: You will assume command of all the forces in Arkansas, and defend the State.

By order of Major General Van Dorn,
DABNEY MOURRY.

In compliance with the above order, I have to announce to the people of the State of Arkansas, among whom I have lived, that I shall defend the State, and that, with the reserve placed at my command, I am confident that I shall be able to drive the invaders from our soil.

JOHN SEDEN ROANE, Brigadier-General Commanding.

THE LATEST FROM CORINTH.

Three Rebel Regiments Routed by a Reconnoitring Force from General Pope's Command.

CORINTH, May 25.—A reconnoitring party from General Pope's command had a skirmish on Saturday with three Rebel regiments, who were routed, with the loss of their blankets, knapsacks and haversacks. Six prisoners were taken and many killed and wounded.

Operations in North Carolina.

WASHINGTON, May 26.—The following items are taken from despatches received at the Navy Department:

The United States steamer Shawsheen, with one company of the 9th New York regiment, on the 9th inst. proceeded up Chowan river, N. C., to Gates county, and destroyed $50,000 worth of bacon, corn, lard, fish, &c., belonging to the Rebel Government. The warehouse containing it was fired. As the party were returning to their boat they were fired upon by thirty Rebel cavalry, but succeeded in driving them off, killing the Rebel leader.

On the night of the 12th inst, a party under Lieut. Flusher, of the Commodore Perry, went on shore six miles above Elizabeth City and three miles into the country, and recovered the apparatus of the Wades' Point Light House opposite. To prevent information of the movement being conveyed to some Rebel cavalry in the neighborhood, all the men found on the route were detained until everything had been conveyed to one of the boats, which was done by some Rebel teams pressed into the service.

On the 14th, the United States steamers Ceres and Lockwood, pursued the Rebel steamer Alice up Roanoke river, and captured her about two miles below Williamsburg. She had on board bacon for the Rebel army and the church bells of Plymouth, which were to be cast into field pieces.

At Plymouth the Commodore Perry found the lantern from the light boat at the mouth of Roanoke river. It was concealed in the Custom House.

Enthusiastic Response to the Call of the Government for more Troops.

BOSTON, May 26.—The call upon the volunteer militia of the State for active service is being gloriously responded to. The enthusiasm of April, 1861, is renewed, and regiments, battalions and companies are rapidly arriving from various parts of the State. The old Sixth regiment, which went through Baltimore on the memorable 19th of April, is fully recruited and ready to move. A large force will be in readiness to move to-night and during to-morrow.

The Retreat of Gen. Banks' Army.

WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, May 26, 8 P. M.

No reliable information of the particulars of the retreat of our forces from Winchester to Williamsport, Maryland, has yet been received at the War Department. Despatches from Williamsport have to be sent to Hagerstown by mounted messengers. From that point they are telegraphed to us, and as soon as received they will be given to the press.

FURTHER FROM EUROPE.

ARRIVAL OF STEAMER KANGAROO.

CAPE RACE, May 26.—The steamer Kangaroo, from Liverpool, via Queenstown on the 15th, passed here to day.

The announcement of the capture of New Orleans was regarded with some doubt in England, but generally credited. It was regarded as a decided triumph for the North though many contended that it will not materially effect the issue.

The bill abolishing church rates had been defeated in the House of Commons by one majority against the Government.

Cotton had declined ¼d. Breadstuffs were dull. Flour 6d.@1s. lower. Wheat 3d., Corn 6d. lower.

Provisions are flat. Consols for money 93¾.

LATER FROM EUROPE.

ARRIVAL OF THE STEAMER HIBERNIA.

CAPE RACE, May 26.—The steamer Hibernia passed here on Sunday morning with Liverpool dates to the 15th. Her news is unimportant.

In the House of Commons the rejection of the Church Rates Abolition Bill was received with cheers by the conservatives, and a resolution declaring that it was unjust and inexpedient to abolish the rates until some other provision was made to supply their place was carried by seventeen majority.

The Paris Bourse closed heavy and lower at 70f.

The Italian Association of Emancipation have sent an address of thanks to Palmerston.

At the London money market the funds showed an increased depression. Consols had further declined. There was considerable activity in the discount market, and a rise in the bank minimum to 3 per cent. was considered not unlikely.

American cotton had declined ⅛@⅛d.

Breadstuffs closed flat.

Provisions heavy.

Consols closed at 93⅝@93¾.

THE LATEST.

CORK, Thursday Morning.—The west wing of Queen's College is totally destroyed by fire, which is still raging.

FROM MEXICO.

The French Army Repulsed near the City of Mexico.

WASHINGTON, May 26.—Semi-official despatches received here to-day state, under date of Orizaba, May 9th, the French troops had advanced to within three leagues of that city, where they encountered a force of 10,000 Mexicans, who attacked them with success, killing 500 of the invaders. It does not seem, from the facts in the despatches, that President Juarez and his Cabinet had fled from the city of Mexico to Queretaro, as recently stated in the newspapers.

INTERESTING FROM NORTH CAROLINA.

The Rebels Seize a Union Pilot and Threaten to Hang Him—General Burnside Retaliates by Arresting the Commissioners of Edenton.

NEW YORK, May 24.—Gen. Burnside has seized all the Commissioners of the town of Edenton, N. C.—T. J. Bland, A. J. Grover, H. A. Bond and F. L. Roberts—and taken them to his headquarters, at Newbern. The fifth Commissioner was not arrested, because he was confined to his bed by sickness. They are held as hostages for the safe return of Mr. White, a Union pilot, who was seized by the Confederates while on a visit to his wife, at Edenton. It is alleged that these Commissioners connived at Mr. White's arrest, though they stoutly deny any complicity with the matter, and insist that they had no power to prevent it. Gen. Burnside intends to send one of the Commissioners to Raleigh, whither Mr. White has been conveyed, to demand his release. The Confederates threaten to hang Mr. White, and Gen. Burnside intends that all the Commissioners shall swing for it in case the Confederates execute their threat.

They were taken to Newbern in the steamer Ocean Wave, in charge of Major Jardine and a guard from his regiment (Hawkes' Zouaves).—They are somewhat like the Selectmen of a Northern town, or the Common Councilmen of New York, i. e., their functions are about the same, though the Edenton Commissioners are far superior to the New Yorkers in character and intelligence. Mr. Roberts especially is a man of very fine abilities. They are somewhat non-committal on the subject of their allegiance, though they affect to deplore the results of secession upon their business, and particularly upon themselves individually. They state that Mr. White was a fisherman in their town, who had been conscripted as a militiaman by their county conscription to serve as a home guard. After serving fifteen days he deserted, and has ever since acted as a pilot for the fleet, during which time he was captured by some Virginia cavalry pickets, who asked his delivery into their hands by the Commissioners.—They said they had nothing to do with it officially, but, as individuals, they advised that he be "let alone." They represent their situation as being extremely hard. There is no Union force to protect them, though a gunboat goes occasionally to Edenton; and as soon as it leaves the Confederates rush in and terrify the citizens. Mr. Bland had been arrested by the Confederates and carted to Raleigh in the rain, to answer to the charge of giving aid and comfort to the "enemy," because he had sold a few articles to some Union officers when they first took possession of the town. He was released and exonerated from the charge; and his fellow-citizens, to compensate him in some measure for his illegal arrest, elected him as Commissioner, which has brought him into his present difficulty.

The Second Uprising of the North—The Massachusetts Militia Ordered on.

BOSTON, May 26.—The following is published here this morning by Governor Andrew, Commander-in-Chief of the Massachusetts troops:

PROCLAMATION.

Men of Massachusetts—The wily, barbarous horde of traitors to the people, to the Government, to our country, and to liberty, move once again the National Capital. They have attacked and routed Major General Banks, and are advancing on Harper's Ferry and marching on Washington. The President calls on Massachusetts to rise once more for his rescue and defence. The whole active militia will be summoned by general order issued from the office of the Adjutant General, to report on Boston Common to-morrow. They will march to relieve and avenge their brethren and friends, to oppose with fiery zeal and courageous patriotism the progress of the foe.

May God encourage their heads and strengthen their arms, and may He inspire the Government and all the people.

Given at headquarters, Boston, 11 o'clock this Sunday evening, May 25th, 1862.

[Signed] J. A. ANDREW.

Visit of the President to Fredericksburg.

MAY 24.—President Lincoln, accompanied by Secretary of War Stanton, and Capt. Dalgren, visited Fredericksburg to-day. The Martha Washington conveyed the party to Aquia Creek, from whence they were taken by railroad to General McDowell's headquarters, opposite Fredericksburg. The occasion was made a gala day. Flags were displayed from the steamboats and shipping at Aquia Creek. Several regiments were reviewed by the President. In the afternoon Mr. Lincoln, accompanied by General McDowell, General Patrick, and a body guard, visited and rode through the streets of Fredericksburg. The President was greeted by the troops and many of the citizens with the utmost enthusiasm. Many apostles of secession were unexpectedly afforded a view of their "boss," the noble representative of the loyal people of the United States. A national salute was fired by one of the batteries in Falmouth. The Presidential party returned late in the evening to Washington. The President seems to manifest the greatest interest in the welfare and movements of the army, and his presence amongst the troops is certainly very inspiriting.

The Presbyterian (New School) General Assembly.

CINCINNATI, Ohio, May 22.—The General Assembly of the New School Presbyterian Church, now in session in this city, have passed a series of resolutions of considerable importance. They are, in substance, as follows: They express, first, a conviction that the head and front of the present rebellion are found in the desire, on the part of the South, to make slavery "perpetual and predominant"—they express the utter aversion of the Presbyterian Church to all "Secession and Nullification," and warm-hearted loyalty to the Union and sustenance of the Government first, and all other issues subservient. These sentiments are spread over about eight resolutions. The whole is followed up with a letter to the President personally, pledging the truest sympathies of themselves to him as the minister or instrument in the hand of God, and commending him for the firmness he has exhibited.

The resolutions were adopted with great spirit, the vote being taken by rising.

Visitors to the West Point Academy.

WASHINGTON, May 26.—The President has appointed the following visitors to the Military Academy at West Point for the annual examination of 1862, viz.: Rev. J. Phelps, of California; James R. Copeland, of Delaware; Horace G. Biddle, of Indiana; Hon. James Knox, of Illinois; Hon. Isaac R. Christian, of Michigan; Edward B. McPherson, of Missouri; Hon. Samuel Upton, of New Hampshire; Hon. Thomas P. Carpenter, of New Jersey; Rev. Dr. Francis Wayland, of Rhode Island; John B. Rodgers, of Tennessee; Philip Hartlett, of Vermont; Dr. Ormand Beatty, of Kentucky; Wm. H. B. Custis, of Virginia; Rev. L. Van Bokkelen, of Maryland; Gen. Joseph Markle, of Pennsylvania; Charles Anderson, of Texas.

New York Militia Ordered to Washington by Gov. Morgan.

ALBANY, May 25.—The Governor has ordered the 5th New York Volunteer Artillery, Colonel Graham, and the 7th regiment New York State Militia, Colonel Lefferts, to leave for Washington to-morrow.

The 8th, 11th, 37th and 71st regiments of militia, of the city of New York, and the 25th militia regiment of Albany, and others, will follow without delay.

General Seigel.

PITTSBURG, PA., May 26.—Gen. Seigel passed through the city this afternoon, *en route* for Washington. On his arrival at the depot he was greeted by an enthusiastic multitude, who induced him by urgent calls to make a short speech, after which he immediately departed in the Philadelphia train.

FROM THE SOUTH.

THE CONFEDERATE CAPITAL TO BE DEFENDED.

Declaration of Jeff. Davis to the Virginia Legislature.

PROCLAMATION FROM GOVERNOR LETCHER.

From the Philadelphia Press.

Our correspondents with the different divisions of the army have sent us files of late Southern papers. These papers are from Richmond, Memphis, New Orleans, and Natchez, Mississippi, and contain many items of news herewith appended. It appears that the Confederates are determined to defend Richmond to the last extremity—at least so Jeff. Davis, Letcher, and the Richmond editors say. The walls of the Richmond papers over the prospect of the capture of the capital show how heavy a blow that triumph of our arms would be. According to the Richmond *Dispatch*, "Richmond is now the point in which are centred the hopes and apprehensions of the South;" and that the Legislature of the State holds the same opinion is proved by the following joint resolutions, which were adopted by that body on the 14th instant:

RESOLVED, by the General Assembly of Virginia, That the General Assembly hereby express its desire that the capital of the State be defended to the last extremity, if such defence be in accordance with the views of the President of the Confederate States; and that the President be assured that whatever destruction and loss of property of the State or individuals shall thereby result will be cheerfully submitted to.

Resolved, That a committee of two on the part of the Senate, and three on the part of the House, be appointed to communicate the adoption of the foregoing resolution to the President.

A copy from the rolls.

Teste, WM. F. GORDON, JR.
C. H. D. and K. of R.

By JNO. T. COWAN, Deputy.

Official Declaration of Jeff. Davis.

On the 15th inst. a joint committee, appointed by the Legislature of Virginia to communicate with Jeff. Davis in relation to the defence of Richmond, made the following report:

"The joint committee, appointed by the two Houses to communicate to the President of the Confederate States the joint resolutions of the General Assembly, in relation to the defence of the city, have discharged the duty confided to them, and respectfully report that their interview with the President was in the highest degree satisfactory, and his views, as communicated with entire frankness to the committee, were well calculated to inspire them with confidence, and to reassure the public mind.

"After reading the resolutions, he desired us to say to the General Assembly that he had received the communication of these resolutions with feelings of lively gratification, and instructed us to assure the Houses that it would be the effort of his life to defend the soil of Virginia, and to cover her capital.

"He further stated that he had never entertained the thought of withdrawing the army from Virginia and abandoning the State; that if, in the course of events, the capital should fall, the necessity of which he did not see or anticipate, that would be no reason for withdrawing the army from Virginia. The war could still be successfully maintained on Virginia soil for twenty years.

"All of which is respectfully submitted.

"JOHN ROBINSON,
"Chairman Senate Committee.
"WOOD BOULDIN,
"Chairman House Committee.

"A copy—Teste:

"WM. F. GORDON, JR.,
"Clerk House of Delegates.

"By JOHN T. COWAN, Deputy."

Proclamation of Governor Letcher.

On the 15th, Governor Letcher issued the following proclamation, declaring that the capital must not be surrendered, and calling a meeting for the purpose of providing for the public defence:

"By the Governor of Virginia—A Proclamation.

"The General Assembly of this Commonwealth having resolved that 'the capital of the State shall be defended to the last extremity, if such defence is in accordance with the views of the President of the Confederate States, and having declared that whatever destruction and loss of property of the State or individuals shall thereby result will be cheerfully submitted to,' and this action being warmly approved and seconded by the Executive: Therefore, I do hereby request all officers who are out of service, from any cause, and all others who may be willing to unite in defending the capital of this State, to assemble this evening, at the City Hall, at five o'clock, and proceed forthwith to organize a force to co-operate with the Tredegar Battalion, and any other force which may be detailed for the purpose indicated. The organization, upon being reported to the Executive, will be recognized and properly officered, as prescribed by law, and be subject to the orders of the Governor for local defence, under regulations necessary. We have a [illegible] upon whom we fully and [illegible] absolutely *effort should be spared which can contribute to the noble object. The capital of Virginia must not be surrendered. Virginians must rally to the rescue.*

[L. S.] "Given under my hand and under the seal of the Commonwealth, at Richmond, this 15th day of May, 1862, and in the eighty sixth year of the Commonwealth. "JOHN LETCHER."

The Public Meeting.

The meeting thus called convened at the City Hall on Thursday evening, Capt. J. B. Danforth presiding, and Mayor Mayo and Governor Letcher made speeches. We quote the report in the *Dispatch*:

"Mr. Joseph Mayo, the Mayor of the city, stated that the City Council had adopted resolutions requesting the Governor to place the Tredegar Battalion at his disposal for the defence of the city. He endorsed in the most enthusiastic manner the proposed action of the meeting, and said that if the city of Richmond was ever surrendered to our enemies it should not be by a descendant of its founder. He would sooner die than surrender our city, and if they wished a Mayor who would surrender the city they must elect another in his place.

"Governor Letcher was then called on, and heartily approved the objects of the meeting. He said that the city should never be surrendered by the President, by the Mayor, or by himself.

"The following committee was appointed by the chairman:

"Colonel St. George Rogers, of Florida; Lieutenant Colonel William Munford, Colonel R. M. Nimmo, Peyton Johnston, William G. Paine, Lieut. C. O. Lamoine, of South Carolina.

"The committee was requested to meet at the City Hall, at nine o'clock to-morrow (Saturday) morning, for the purpose of receiving the names of all persons who are disposed to unite under the organization recommended by the proclamation of the Governor. The meeting then adjourned."

The Opinion of the Richmond Editors.

The action of Davis and Letcher is warmly commended in the editorial column of the *Dispatch*, but the *Examiner* abuses Davis for "telling his beads instead of fighting." We copy a few passages from the editorial of the *Dispatch*:

"We are proud of the spirit of our Governments, Confederate and State, relative to this question of holding and defending this State to the last. The army will not abandon the sacred soil of Virginia. That has been made the battle-ground, and on that must the enemy establish his superiority in a fair fight before it will be abandoned to him. The evacuation of the sea coast positions and cities became a necessity. There was no avoiding it, in consequence of the immense advantage enjoyed by the enemy in his possession of the entire navy of the United States, and the material and mechanical skill for the rapid construction of iron-clad gunboats, while we had neither a navy nor the material and the mechanical force to enable us to compete with him in any sense. It is true, we had the Virginia; but, besides her, nothing. Her destruction, and the questions it involves, suggest matters of debate which afford neither satisfaction nor benefit now to discuss. Our inability to meet the enemy on the water, as a general question, was clear and indisputable, and the withdrawal from the sea unavoidable.

"Second to Virginia is the defence of this city, for manifold reasons, and it is in keeping with the general purpose of both Governments that they should resolve to the uttermost to defend Richmond. All the means in the power of the State and the Confederacy are pledged to this, and we may be assured that the enemy will not be allowed to gratify the prominent desire of his heart, to lecture and dominee over the inhabitants of this farfamed and beautiful town, until every means is exhausted.

"The President nobly takes the stand that, though Richmond should fall, there are plenty of battlefields yet in Virginia, to fight for the cause for twenty years. The sentiment is as truthful as patriotic. The Confederate Government assures us that the Old Dominion is not to be given up. God forbid that it should. It would be giving up much more than Virginia. The cause would be, indeed, itself well-nigh surrendered in that event. The Government is not only just but wise, in its determination to stand by Virginia to the last.

* * * "To lose Richmond is to lose Virginia, and to lose Virginia is to lose the key to the Southern Confederacy. Virginians, Marylanders, ye who have rallied to her defence, would it not be better to fall in her streets than to basely abandon them, and view from the surrounding hills the humiliation of the capital of the Southern Confederacy? To die in her streets would be bliss to this, and to fall where tyrants strode would be to consecrate the spot anew and wash it of every stain.

* * * "The loss of Richmond in Europe would sound like the loss of Paris, on London, and the moral effect will scarcely be less. Let us, therefore, avert the great disaster by a reliance on ourselves. It is better that Richmond should fall as the capital of the Confederacy, than that Richmond exist the depot of the hireling hordes of the North. But Richmond can be defended, and saved from pollution. The fate of the capital of the Confederacy rests with the people."

The Ruins of Richmond.

In another article the *Dispatch* says:

"The next few days may decide the fate of Richmond. It is either to remain the capital of the Confederacy, or to be turned over to the Federal Government as a Yankee conquest. The capital is either to be secured or lost—it may be feared not temporarily—and with it Virginia. Then, if there is blood to be shed, let it be shed here; no soil of the Confederacy could drink it up more acceptably, and none would hold it more gratefully. Wife, family, and friends are nothing. Leave them all for one glorious hour to be devoted to the Republic. Life, death, and wounds are nothing, if we only be saved from the fate of a captured capital and a humiliated Confederacy. Let the Government act; let the people act. There is time yet.

"If fate comes to its worst, let the ruins of Richmond be its most lasting monument."

Movements of Gen. Johnston's Army.

The Petersburg *Express* has a story that General Johnston intends to drive back McClellan. It says:

"We learn from a gentleman who left the army at 10 o'clock Tuesday forenoon, that Gen. Johnston's vanguard was only one mile this side of New Kent Court House. General McClellan's advanced forces were at the Court House, but the impression seemed to prevail that he was retiring. New Kent Court House is twenty-eight miles from Richmond, and were McClellan defeated at that point the greater portion of his forces would be compelled to retreat in the direction of Yorktown, before reaching which they would be captured or cut to pieces. It was thought not improbable that General Johnston would tender the young Napoleon battle."

The Richmond *Examiner* of May 19 says:

Gen. Johnston's forces have now occupied a line in the vicinity of Richmond, so as to cover the (river) batteries from any land attack.

We, of course, do not enter into any details of the recent movement of General Johnston's forces, beyond the general statement that it is supposed to have contributed to the safety of the city of Richmond.

Everything has been quiet on General Johnston's lines since their recent movement, with the exception of an unimportant cavalry skirmish at Botton's Bridge, in which we suffered no loss.

Rebel Newspaper Account of the Gunboat Fight on James River.

The fight between our gunboats and the rebel battery Darling, on the James river, continues to be the fruitful source of comment for the rebel papers. The battle is thus described in a letter to the Richmond *Dispatch*:

"FORT HUGER, HARDY'S BLUFF,
"Wednesday, May 8.

"Three of the enemy's gunboats, two of them iron clad, came up at 8 o'clock this morning to Fort Darling, (commanded by Capt. John U. Shivers,) and opened fire, discharging about three hundred rounds of shell and rifle shot. The fort, which had only five mounted guns, returned the fire until 10 o'clock, when orders were given to spike the guns and burn the quarters. A fine company of light artillery and in antry had started from Smithfield, Isle of Wight county, to participate in the fight, but learning that the above orders had been given, they returned. The three gunboats then moved up the river eight miles to the fort on Hardy's Bluff, and at 11 o'clock the guns at this fort opened fire, which was returned by the boats continually until 2 o'clock. After firing over two hundred rounds of shell and rifle, they passed up the river out of range of the guns at the fort, we having fired the first and last guns. Our flag waved gloriously throughout the engagement; not a man was killed in the fort, and only three were wounded.

"Captain J. M. Maury, (captain of the fort,) during the entire engagement of three hours and a half, was as cool and collected as if only performing the daily practising of his guns on the fort; also, Captain H. H. Aikin, of the Varina Artillery, and Captain Branch, of White's Artillery, and their respective officers (all their names I did not learn); nor can too much praise be given to the men in each company, obeying every order from their officers bravely and cheerfully, as if they had faced an hundred battles instead of this their first battle. It would have pleased their friends to have witnessed how gallantly they fought. After the battle, Captain Maury caused the men to be drawn up in line in the fort, and stated if there was a man that did not wish to remain in the fort and fight with him, to step out of the ranks, and he would allow him to leave the fort and get out of the range of the guns. Not a man moved; not an eye quivered; but with one universal cry of 'Stand by the gun! we will fight!' Can such men be conquered?"

The following is the official Confederate report of the repulse:

"DRURY'S BLUFF—11 A. M.,
May 15, 1862.

"SIR: We have engaged the enemy's fire gunboats for two-and-a-half hours. We fired the Galena (iron-clad.) She has withdrawn, going down the river, accompanied by the three wooden vessels.

"Our loss is killed and wounded small.

"Respectfully, your obedient servant,
"E. FARRAND.

"Hon. S. R. MALLORY, Secretary of the Navy."

Important News in Relation to Com. Farragut.

The following very important information we obtain from the Vicksburg *Evening Citizen* of the 13th:

The latest we can ascertain of the whereabouts of the gunboats below is that they arrived at Natchez yesterday morning about 4 o'clock, and that they are anchored in the stream below that city. What they are doing, or how long they will remain in that quarter, has not transpired.

NATCHEZ, May 13.—Two schooners and three gunboats anchored in the river opposite this place.

We have a further report to the effect that the gunboats had sent a yawl with a flag of truce and bearing a demand for the surrender of the city. As the yawl landed, a number of people had gathered to witness the proceedings, and the men from the boat requested that some one in the crowd should take the despatches and deliver them to the Mayor. None could be found willing to accommodate the Yankees, until at last they prevailed upon a negro man to carry the note to the Mayor. When he delivered the document, he was informed on certain a demand for the surrender of the city, a crowd of exasperated citizens took the fisherman and hung him, and the Mayor refused to surrender, and the gunboats gave them till ten o'clock to-day to determine what they should do.

Business in Natchez, Miss.

The Natchez (Miss.) *Courier*, of May 15, says:

Before the arrival of the United States fleet of gunboats off Natchez, business was at a very low ebb, but it now appears that their presence has knocked vitality entirely out of trade. No branch of business, probably, feels a panic more sensibly than a newspaper establishment; and yet the editor and the employees, like the commodore on shipboard, is compelled to stand at his post—to "sink or swim, survive or perish," with the chances the wagers. This is just our position at present. Notwithstanding the dullness of the times in Natchez, we have yet hope that things will take a more favorable turn, at least for once, in our day and generation.

Beauregard Wants Vegetables.

CORINTH, MAY 15.—Our sick rather must have vegetables. All substantial officers will purchase and transmit by railroad such vegetables as can be procured. The people along the line of the different roads are urgently requested to bring to their respective depots, from day to day, such as can be spared. The transportation will be furnished by the mail trains. G. T. BEAUREGARD.

The Burning Cotton.

A correspondent of the Little Rock *True Democrat*, writing from Memphis, details what he saw from the steamboat while on his way to that city:

After leaving Helena, we came to the cotton-burners—several large steamers sent out by order of the Government to burn all the cotton to be found anywhere on the river. A dreary, desolate view it was; the smoking, blackened bales floated past us, and in some places the river for miles was covered with huge masses of the raw material, and the thickets that fringed the water were whitened as if snow-drifts were piled up against their green spring foliage. The heart sickened at the sad spectacle of black smoke wreaths ahead, and the conviction was irresistibly forced upon all present that we were in the great theatre of the war, where blackness and desolation meet you at every step.

The farms were inundated by the overflow, and the houses left tenantless and desolate; the only living things to be seen were the cotton-burners, at their patriotic work. The prospect was sad for us, but when the news reaches England, unwilling, abolitionized England, a wail for sorrow will arise that will shake the foundation of her ancient throne.

The destruction of the crop on hand, and the failure to plant this season, will open her eyes to the folly of her position. In ten days there will not be 10,000 bales in the whole Mississippi valley, and none planted. The golden time has passed when England might have saved herself, but she would not; the fruits of her folly must rest on her shoulders.

Before this reaches you, the great Mississippi valley will have no cotton, and if the enemy conquer the river, it will be a barren conquest, for, like the Russians, we have destroyed our Moscow.

The *Mississippian* learns that the torch is being applied readily to the cotton along the valley of the Mississippi, and adds:

"If there was any evidence wanting to make the establishment of our independence absolutely certain, this would furnish all that could be asked to convince the most skeptical. It is a damning proof of the sincerity of our professions, and a clinching argument of the certainty of our success. It shows a proud, a glorious sentiment. Let it be preserved in to the last. Let the cotton burn until the flickering flames show that the last lock has been consumed, before the enemy is permitted to get a pound."

More Handwriting on the Wall.

It will be seen that some mysterious handwriting has been discovered on the walls of the prominent places in Richmond. The Union men, who, we were assured some time ago, had a secret league, no doubt find this writing the only sure means of corresponding with their friends. The *Examiner*, of the 19th instant, has the following comment:

The citizens of Richmond had their patriotism shocked again yesterday morning by treasonable writings appearing on the walls and public places in the city. We are not of those who see in these devices the evidence of the existence in our midst of a feeling in sympathy with the sentiments therein set forth; but rather look upon it as the malicious work of some lawless characters, who should be arrested by the police, and made to pay for their mischievous doings under the laws, by the imposition of a fine for the defacement of public property.

There may be a traitorous design in it, but we do not believe it. Still, the thing may work evil by augmenting in weak minds the excitement which present events naturally excite in all minds. For this reason, citizens would be justified in visiting upon any one found so meanly engaged, summary punishment, sudden and severe, on the spot. Let the midnight "chalkers" look out, whoever they be, whether secret foe in our midst, or mischief-makers at large. There is vengeance sleeping for such, and it may fall when not looked for.

The Memphis Markets.

As our readers may wish to read the market reports of Memphis, we append the following report taken from the *Avalanche* of the 15th inst.:

COTTON and TOBACCO.—No sales, receipts, or shipments.

FLOUR.—With meagre supplies and active retail demand prices have further adv