The South.

THE ARMOURER OF MUNSTER.

A PAGE FROM THE

HISTORY OF FANATICISM.

(*Continued.*)

VII.—THE SORTIE.

The sun had scarcely risen the next morning, when the wild beat of the drum summoned the population to the market-place. The signal was not to be misunderstood, and it was obeyed with a rapidity of movement on all sides which proved the devotion of the people to the common cause.

Franz started from his bed at the first roll of the drum, and hastened to the forge. Elise was already there. In a few minutes the apprentices followed, and then Klara, whose face was stricken with terror.

"You see," said Elise, "that I am ready to help at your toilet;" and she smiled so benignly that for such a guerdon Franz would have risked a thousand lives.

The business of arming was the work of a few minutes. Franz and the apprentices were speedily arrayed in corslets and morions, and stood on the the threshold to take their departure.

"You go forth to battle, Franz Wagner," said, Elise, "may the Lord crown you with victory in the good fight;" and, for the first time, she pressed the hand of the youth.

"I go forth joyfully!" exclaimed Franz in a transport of happiness; too blest in the front of danger if you bestow a single thought upon me."

"I will pray for your safety; do not risk your life needlessly," murmured Klara; but Franz heard her not. Multitudes of people were rushing like a torrent through the narrow streets, and Franz and his companions were swiftly drawn into the stream and carried out of sight.

On the market-place, in front of the cathedral, a dull fire, smouldering in its ashes, marked the spot where the books of the inhabitants had been recently burned. Crowds were gathering to the spot, full of breathless expectation and eager for action. They were already weary of suspense and panted for the conflict upon which the fate of the city depended. In the porch of the church sat two deacons, waiting to receive the offerings of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and menacing all who held back the smallest portion of their wealth with the doom of Ananias and Sapphira. Two prophetesses stood by the table of the offerings, with hair dishevelled and garments rent, admonishing and threatening the people.—They understood the art of working upon the superstitious credulity of their audience, for they had practised it long in their profession of wandering fortune-tellers.

While this scene was going forward in the porch, the large space without was rapidly filling with dense masses of armed men, waiting impatiently for the appearance of their leader. At length, the supreme chief of the movement, the mighty Matthias, was seen advancing towards the assembly. The commotion caused by his approach was like the low swell of the sea before a coming storm. He was clothed in his sable robe of hair-cloth, and he grasped in his right hand the ponderous spear, whose white ash handle was yet stained with the blood of the old armourer. The natural ferocity of his aspect was lighted up with more lurid brilliancy than ever; foam exuded from his lips, and the expression of his eyes was demoniacal. He prepared to speak, and the armed masses closed around him.

"The son of Antichrist," he thundered forth, "the cursed priest of Baal, the spotted tyrant who once ruled over you, free citizens of Munster, has surrounded our walls with lines of fire! The bishop pitches his camp within pistol-shot of our ramparts, and is hemming us in on all sides. If we allow him to fortify his position, these rank cowards, who dare not meet us man to man, will reduce us by famine. Therefore, the Spirit hath said to me, "Arise, Matthias, gird on thy sword; take with thee five hundred chosen men, and go forth and destroy the ungodly. Lo! this day shall they be delivered into thy hand!" Brethren, those who are true to the holy cause and faithful unto death, who would die rather than submit their necks again to the iron yoke we have even now thrown off, let them stand forth, and follow me, and the host of the enemy shall be scattered before us as the chaff is driven before the whirlwind."

A fearful struggle of contending emotions agitated Franz during the delivery of this rhapsody. He was eager for the battle, but he loathed the leader who called him to the field. Whatever might have been his irresolution, however, had he been swayed by these considerations alone, the recollection of Elise determined all doubts. He thought of her at that moment, and of the greeting that awaited him should he return in triumph; and the last words of Matthias were scarcely finished, when he stood forward and offered himself for the service. His apprentices followed, and then the whole body of armourers and smiths, animated by a common zeal for the honor of the craft, and then followed the butchers, because his uncle, Meister Gerard Kippenbrock, was at the head of their trade; then others pressed forward, and in a few minutes the five hundred men were counted out and separated from the rest of the crowd,

"You were the first who volunteered for the sortie," said Matthias to Franz, "therefore be the first in the host, and lead the people of Zion to the battle as my general and my brother."

Matthias knew nothing of Franz, or of his fitness for the important office to which he had promoted him; but he acted upon an impulse which seldom errs on such occasions. He saw in the energy and resolution of his air that he was exactly the person to lead the desperate enterprise upon which they were about to be engaged. And the event justified his confidence.

Franz had no sooner received this mark of distinction than the principal people pressed about him, and offered up vehement prayers for his safe return. Orator Hoffman, amongst the rest, clasped him eagerly to his breast, and said,—

"This day it was my intention to have admitted thee into our Church by the holy rite of baptism; but thou must go where the Spirit leads thee. And should thou fall in the fight, thou shalt be saved by the baptism of blood, which hath more power than that of water."

"Forward, ye saints, to the conflict, shouted Matthias, who carried no arms except his spear, and had no defence or covering but his vest of hair-cloth. The prophet rushed towards the gates of the town, singing as he went the old canticle, "Come, Holy Spirit!" Franz and his five hundred fighting men followed in chorus.

They had scarcely passed the outworks, when they encountered a band of the bishop's men-at-arms, who were hovering about in the act of reconnoitring. The first rush of the Anabaptists, who appeared more formidable than they really were, in consequence of the front ranks being composed exclusively of the armourers, clad in corslets and steel caps, and otherwise well appointed, threw the little party into confusion. A sudden panic seized them, and they turned to fly; but this was a movement of difficulty from the nature of the ground. The struggling houses of the suburbs, and the garden fences intersecting each other irregularly from the base of the walls, left the troopers not a foot of ground to manœuvre upon except the highroad, which at this point was inconveniently narrow. The advantage, therefore, was altogether on the side of the Anabaptists: and the rabble of the town, who followed the armed men, and were supplied plentifully with matchlocks, increased the disorder by throwing themselves amongst the fences, and pouring in a close and murderous fire upon the flying enemy, densely packed upon the road. At that short distance, the clumsy matchlock was as sure and deadly as the modern rifle.

"Glory in the highest!" sang Matthias, beginning the second part of the chant. Franz and his followers took up the strain, and the unison was like the voice of one man, pealing loud and deep over the heads of the devoted fugitives; while the prophet, brandishing his spear, rushed furiously to the onslaught. In this moment of terrible excitement, all feelings of aversion to Matthias were lost in the fidelity of the soldier to his leader: and Franz, close at his side, enacted miracles of valour, frequently interposing his mailed breast to shield the half-naked and defenceless body of the seer. The contest was short and sanguinary. On the one side was the fiery zeal of fanaticism; on the other, the mechanical courage of mercenary troops reduced to a temporary extremity.

The pursuit became hotter, and the *melee* more furious, as they hunted the troopers towards the camp, Matthias shouting aloud the words of the death-song with which Muntzer and Metzler had formerly excited the passions of their unfortunate followers in the exterminating struggle now known in history as the Peasant War. The men-at-arms were slaughtered in detail; but a few survivors effected their escape by throwing themselves into the bishop's camp.

The alarm was now given on the other side; and in every quarter men might be seen getting under arms. The gathering was rapidly completed, and the Hessian cavalry turned out almost at the first notes of their bugles. The brief interval admitted of little preparation for a regular advance. The Anabaptists were already upon them, and the Hessians rushed out pell mell to the charge. A moment more, and the unfinished works of the camp were carried by the storming party; the ditch was filled and the breast-work levelled.

"Victory!" shouted Franz, as he stood on the verge of the scarp.

The excitement of the fight had now roused all the boldness of his character; he had even acquired a ferocity which could be allayed only by pushing his advantage to the utmost. Wielding his halbert high above his his head, with the prophet and his desperate companions by his side, he cut his way to the centre of the camp, where the banner of the seer waved over the tent of the prince bishop.

"This is the den of Antichrist!" exclaimed Matthias, rushing into the tent, while Franz, with his wild band, pressed on the retreating and routed enemy, and continued the slaughter until the deserted camp was left wholly in his power.

As he returned from the pursuit, he heard feeble and plaintive cries from the tent of the prince-bishop. The fury of the battle had passed away; he was calm once more; and that despairing cry did not appeal in vain to his mercy. He darted into the tent, and there he found the prophet, like a wolf in a sheep-fold, slaying the unfortunate domestics of the bishop. The ground was covered with dead bodies; and two pale-faced boys, pages of the prince, knelt before Matthias, whose uplifted hand was about to deal their death-blow.

"Brother Matthias," said Franz, earnestly, almost sternly, "thou hast appointed me leader of the host, and I cannot suffer thee to set an evil example to my soldiers by the murder of these helpless children. Better it is to take them captive, and retain them as hostages, while we save their souls by instruction and baptism in our holy faith. Come, we have no time to lose; the fugitives have alarmed the outlying tents, and if we delay five minutes longer our retreat will be cut off."

"Thou art right, brother," replied Matthias, mastered by the boldness of Franz. "Call our people together,—let us go hence. And for this brood of vipers, thou shalt have thy way. But, should they escape, thou must answer for them with thy head. To-morrow I will baptize them."

The drum summoned the Anabaptists from the plunder of the camp—the spoiling of the Philistines, as they called it; and the rallied and reinforced troops of the prince-bishop arrived only in time to see the last ranks of the Anabaptists pass in safety through the gate of Munster.

VIII.—THE NIGHT AFTER THE VICTORY.

The scene which presented itself to the victors as they defiled through the streets was in the highest degree exhilarating. All the people had either come out of their houses to receive that valiant band, or thronged to the windows and balconies with flags and waving of handkerchiefs, to greet them as they passed. Wild acclamations, songs of triumph, and religious chants, saluted them everywhere. The maidens of the city, robed in white, and carrying green pine-branches in their hands, advanced in procession, headed by Jan Bockhold, their clear and youthful voices joining in the full chorus of the hallelujah. The redemption of a kingdom, the restoration of a dynasty, the conquest of an empire, could hardly have called forth more enthusiasm than was displayed by the inhabitants, when the remnant of the five hundred, marching into the market-place, deposited their spoils as common property in the nave of the cathedral. The two captive pages were duly delivered over for instruction in the faith to Orator Rothman; and when the first movements of the excitement had somewhat subsided, the prophet closed the public transactions of that eventful day by a long address, in the course of which he pronounced an eloquent panegyric on the daring courage of the conquerors, especially distinguishing the zeal and heroism of Franz.

The novelty of his situation, his sudden elevation to a post of influence and responsibility, the tangible fact of the victory he had achieved, and the strangeness of hearing his name shouted out on all sides, made the heart of Franz throb high, and carried him away for a while on the roaring stream of popular glorification. But at the approach of the procession of young girls, the delusion of military ambition passed all at once out of his head. He looked around eagerly for Elise. The victory was for her, not for him. He was conscious only of her last words and her implied promise; and the soul of that impromptu conqueror, instead of rising to the height of the great occasion which he had himself almost created, fluttered back to the humble house out of which he had that morning passed under circumstances so widely contrasted with the pride and pomp of his return.

Evening darkened over the old walls of the imperial city; the people, wearied and worn out by the vicissitudes of the day, gradually dispersed, and returned to their homes; and the streets were nearly silent and deserted, when Franz, followed by his Gesellen, of whom one-half had fallen in the camp, slowly returned to the house of Krutzlinger.

A triumphal arch of pine-boughs had been erected in front of the door to receive the victor; and beneath that arch stood Elise, habited in her white robe. Her beauty, naturally lofty and energetic, had acquired an air of grandeur and inspiration; her long dark hair fell luxuriantly over her shoulders; her cheek was deeply flushed; and her eye flashed with the fitful radiance of passionate emotion.

"Welcome from the victory, brave soldier of the faith!" she exclaimed; and, casting off all restraint of maiden reserve, she flung herself fervently into the arms of Franz.

"Beloved!" murmured Franz, as with proud exultation he drew her to his mailed breast, and, in spite of his heavy morion, pressed his lips to hers in a long, long kiss, burning with love and fanaticism.

All doubts were ended in that moment of overwhelming rapture. Elise was his own forever. Religious zeal had suddenly accomplished that which fervent protestations and wasted homage had hitherto failed to raise even into distant hope. The firmness and resolution of her character gave a still higher zest to his happiness. It was the deliberate act of a woman of high resolves and bold passions, who could neither be surprised into a weakness, nor induced to retreat from any position she had once determined to adopt. The confidence he derived from his sense of that fixity of purpose which distinguished all her actions, gave a profounder colouring to the feelings of pride and devotion with which he regarded her.

The door of the large hall, which occupied nearly the whole of the ground-floor of the house, and in which the family of Krutzlinger and the apprentices were in the habit of meeting at their meals, quickly opened, while Franz yet stood gazing upon the lustrous eyes of Elise; and thence issued a little man, very old and very hideous, withered and wrinkled, with unkempt hair and a threadbare doublet, which he strove to hide under the folds of a ragged cloak. Grinning like an ape in a mood of mischievous frolic, he turned his small, sharp, squinting eyes upon the young lovers, and stretching out the bony skeleton of a hand towards them, he gibbered rather than spoke his greeting.

"Brother Franz," he said, "this day of days I was in the Spirit, and I saw thee in the flesh amongst the soldiers of the faith treading the wine-press of slaughter. And lo! my vision hath been fulfilled. Verily, I say to thee, thy name shall be great in Zion!"

Having delivered himself of this prophetic speech, the puny monster moved into the street with such a comical assumption of dignity, that had it not been for the disagreeable sensations occasioned by his first appearance, Franz might have given way to a laugh at the expense of his gravity. But the revolting wretchedness of the stranger's general aspect, associated with the ghostly arrogance of his manner, produced a feeling of painful repugnance.

"I sometimes fancy," he said slowly to Elise, "that my native city has been changed into one vast mad-house, in which lunatics are suffered to go about at large with impunity. Who is that man?"

"Johann Paiskoschirer," replied Elise: reproachingly; "a bankrupt goldsmith, but a man amongst us. The Spirit hath descended upon him, and he frequently edifies the congregations of the Church, holding the next place after the prophet Matthias and Jan Bockhold."

"What a mob of prophets we are blessed with!" replied Franz. "Heaven forgive me if I sin in thinking that we might advantageously dispense with some of them!"

That night the festive board was decked with unwonted luxury. Rich lamps, decorated with evergreen shrubs, shed their broad light over the table, which was loaded with a variety of the most costly viands; and the rarest wines from the distant Rhine, contributed in bountiful measure from the common storehouses of the city. Klara sat apart from the table, her golden hair, wreathed with dark green leaves, fell in profuse curls over her white robe; but her face was pale, her head was bent upon her clasped hands, and big tears fell fast along her fingers.

"Klara," said Franz, gently, "dearest Klara, you do not give me welcome."

"Forgive me, dear Franz," she replied, in a voice full of sadness; "but every drop of blood shed in this dreadful war seems to me as if it fell in poison on my heart. I cannot summon courage to meet the horrors that surround us,—I cannot forget that my poor uncle was slaughtered as a sacrifice to this cruel creed, which may be the true faith, but which appears to me a fearful delusion. But I will try to submit to the will of God, in whose hands are the issues of life and death."

"Heed her not," exclaimed Elise, while she eagerly filled a cup of wine for Franz. "She has not been born again; she lives in the darkness of her errors, and knows not the regenerating truth that we must all offer up our holiest affections on the altar, and burst asunder our dearest ties for conscience' sake."

"Heaven preserve me from the guilt of such unrighteous zeal!" sighed Klara, who in the depth of her grief and humiliation did not dare to turn her eyes towards the revel which was now about to begin.

Elise was in that state of ecstatic fervour before which all minor forms of restraint and modesty melted away. She took the hand of Franz, and pressing it with fondness and energy, drew him towards her, and placed him on a chair by her side. She was the dominant spirit of the scene, the mistress of the festival; her ascendant genius controlling the weaker minds around her, even more effectively than her commanding beauty. The apprentices seated themselves opposite to their leader and his dark-haired enchantress.

Long was the feast, and loud was the revel, of that night. The toils of the day were proudly rewarded by the enthusiastic encomiums and flashing glances of Elise, whose bright smiles were liberally dispensed to all, while her hand was frequently clasped by Franz, unseen by his comrades. The battle was fought over again in many a vivid recital of special incidents of bravery; and the victory was duly honored by deep draughts of old Rhenish. Devoutly too, did they pledge themselves in the same rare vintage, "to live and die by their faith." All the scruples and misgivings which had hitherto tormented Franz, and which his naturally sound sense and honest policy had so often forced upon his conscience, were now swept from his mind; and maddened by wine, which he drank without restraint, he saw nothing but the glowing charms of Elise, and felt only the fierce excitement of the reckless partisan soldier.

Klara shuddered at every burst of frenzied enjoyment that broke from the rioters, and sat silently enduring the wild orgie, and the uncontrolled license which profaned with such impious excesses the sacred name of religion. As the night wore on, and the checks of ordinary courtesy became more and more relaxed, the apprentices frequently rallied her upon her austerity, and with intrusive attentions, which sometimes verged upon licentiousness, endeavored to draw her into the mad festivity. But she coldly repelled them, with a shrinking at her heart, which even the gentleness and sweetness of her nature, always unwilling to wound or distress others, could not conceal. At length, as the bell for the second hour after midnight tolled from the tower of St. Lambert's, finding that the revellers exhibited no intention of separating, she rose to depart. Taking one of the tapers from the table, she held out her hand, trembling with suppressed emotion, to Franz, and said, timidly,—

"Good night, brother. I do not willingly disturb you; but it is very late." Then turning to Elise, she added, "Dear Elise, will you not retire?"

Elise made no reply to her gentle remonstrance, for at that moment her lip was pressed to the wine-cup; nor did Franz take her proffered hand, for his were both clasped round the hand of her sister. Absorbed in their bewildering dream of passion, the lovers were insensible to the call of reason and decorum. Feigning a calmness which she did not feel, Klara retired to her chamber with a breaking heart; and when she found herself alone, gave vent to the tears which, throughout that dreadful night, she had struggled to control.

The carouse continued deep into the night. Imperceptibly the senses of the rioters gave way under the effect of their libations; till overpowered by fatigue and wine, Franz and the apprentices fell into the heavy and feverish sleep of intoxication. The hand of Elise was still locked in that of Franz. She alone, of all the revellers, sat with open eyes gazing upon the scene of disorder around her. There was, perhaps, a vague effort to collect herself. Her disengaged hand wandered over her face, and straggled through her hair; and she tried to gather up a coherent image of the strange group before her, buried in profound slumber. But she, too, was soon overcome by weariness and exhaustion. Her hand fell listlessly by her side, her head slowly drooped and, at last, rested in deep sleep upon the table, covered with empty flasks and the remains of the feasts, and lighted by the sickly rays of the dying lamps.

[*To be Continued.*]

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PROPOSALS FOR MAIL BAGS.

CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA,
POSTOFFICE DEPARTMENT,
Montgomery, March 27, 1861.

SEALED PROPOSALS will be received at this Department until the 15th day of May next, at 12 o'clock, M., for furnishing for the use of the Confederate States of America, in such quantities as may be required and ordered for the three ensuing years, on the following description, to wit:

CANVASS MAIL BAGS OR SACKS.

Size No. 1, (13 inches in length and 14 inches in circumference,) to be made of coarse canvass, weighing at least fifteen ounces to the yard of 22 inches wide, the threads of the warp and weft to be composed of five yarns each.

Size No. 2, (14 inches in length and 18 inches in circumference,) to be made of coarse canvass, weighing at least fourteen ounces to the yard of 22 inches wide, the threads of the warp and weft to be composed of four yarns each.

Size No. 3, (22 inches in length and 34 inches in circumference,) to be made of coarse canvass, weighing at least eighteen ounces to the yard of 22 inches wide, the threads of the warp and weft to be composed of three yarns each.

The sizes, lengths and widths of the bags, mentioned in the above specification, are to be understood as the sizes of the bags when finished.

No proposal will be considered, if not accompanied with specimens of the articles proposed to be furnished, showing the consistence, texture, quality of materials and workmanship, covered with a sample of the yarn of which the articles are to be made, and they are to be rejected or accepted by the Postmaster General, or his chief clerk, in the exercise of a sound discretion.

The proposals should specify the price of each article proposed to be furnished.

No proposal will be considered, if not accompanied with specimens, and a certificate of the manufacturer, showing the consistence, texture, quality of materials and workmanship, covered with a sample of the yarn of which the articles are to be made, and they are to be rejected or accepted by the Postmaster General, or his chief clerk, in the exercise of a sound discretion.

The specimens or samples must be delivered at this Department before the first day of May next, and those which may then be before us, and which may be approved, will be considered as if they were submitted with the proposals herein invited.

Every specimen or sample must be marked with the name of the bidder, and be so arranged that it can be easily identified with the proposal to which it belongs.

All specimens deposited in the Department, which are not selected and contracted for, may be taken by the bidders within a reasonable time after the contracts are awarded, and the bidders will be expected to take them away, and to make no claim upon the Department for any loss or damage to them.

Bidders will state the earliest period at which they will be able to furnish supplies of the articles bid for, to the extent of the contract they may be awarded to them, as it will be one of the controlling points in awarding the contracts. Bids will be rejected which do not specify a period beyond the 1st of July next for the delivery of supplies.

Proposals must be marked on the outside of the envelope with the name of the article to be proposed for, and be addressed to the "Chief of the Appointment Bureau," Montgomery, Ala.

JOHN H. REAGAN,
Postmaster General.

ap 22 d

PROPOSALS FOR WRAPPING PAPER, TWINE AND SEALING WAX.

CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA,
POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,
Montgomery, March 27 th, 1861.

SEALED PROPOSALS will be received at this Department until the 1st day of May next, at 12 o'clock, M., for furnishing WRAPPING PAPER, TWINE and SEALING WAX for the use of the Post Office of the Confederate States, for four years from and after the date of the execution of the contract. The said articles are to be delivered, free of expense, at this Department. The estimated quantity of each article, and the quantity thereof, required yearly, is as follows:

2,200 reams Manilla Wrapping Paper, 20 by 25 inches in size, and to weigh not less than 24 pounds to the ream, and each ream to contain 20 perfect quires; 10 reams of the same kind of Paper 25 by 35 inches in size, and to weigh not less than 50 pounds to the ream.

3,000 pounds Cotton Twine, 4 strands, hard twisted, and in balls to weigh 1 pound each; 500 pounds of the same kind of Twine, on spools, each spool to weigh from 1½ to 2 pounds.

2,000 pounds of coarse Hemp Twine, about ⅛ of an inch in diameter, well twisted, and in balls or hanks weighing from 1½ to 2 pounds each.

150 pounds of Scarlet Sealing Wax, of good quality, for ordinary use.

Proposals will be received for each article separately, or for the whole. The contract will be awarded to the lowest bidder, the best bid to be determined after a careful examination for the purpose of ascertaining which bid will, in its practical results, be most advantageous to the Department. The Postmaster General reserves to himself the right to reject any bid where it is apparent that a party to the bid has set a price far too low and a price at a very high rate, without proper regard to cost of each, for the purpose of entering the contract at the bid price, and estimate consume in the advertisement.

Samples of each article required must accompany the proposals, and each bidder must furnish with his proposal evidence of his ability to comply with his bid.

Two sufficient sureties will be required to a contract. Failure to furnish the articles contracted for promptly, or furnishing articles inferior to those contracted for, will be considered a breach of the contract.

Bidders will state the earliest period at which they will be able to furnish supplies of the articles bid for, to the extent of the contract they may be awarded to them, as it will be one of the controlling points in awarding the contracts. Bids will be rejected which do not specify a period beyond the 1st of July next for the delivery of supplies.

Proposals must be marked on the outside of the envelope with the name of the article to be proposed for, and be addressed to the "Chief of the Appointment Bureau," Montgomery, Ala.

JOHN H. REAGAN,
Postmaster General.

ap 22 d

PROPOSALS FOR CIRCULAR MARKING AND RATING STAMPS.

CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA,
POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,
Montgomery, March 27th, 1861.

SEALED PROPOSALS will be received at this Department until the first day of May next, until 12 o'clock, M., for furnishing for the postoffices of the Confederate States, for four years from the first day of July next, Marking and Rating Stamps of the following descriptions, viz:

Class 1. Circular Marking stamps of steel, or other metal of equal durability, of a diameter not to exceed 3¼ inches, with the name of the office and State, with type for the year, months and days, in blocks of base metal, with suitable screws for the same, with handles in Cross, Monogram or Heart wood, of a form and manner most convenient for use. For this class of Stamps, the bidder will price the entire cost, charge, per letter or figure, for inserting, at his discretion, as required, when double and figures as Feb. Feb. 2 and 10. Ship, etc.

Class 2. Circular Marking Stamps of iron or other material equal thereto, for the use of postoffices and route agents on the railroads and steamboat mail routes, with the name of the route and State, or the name of the terminal or three letters with type for month and hours, in blocks of the same material, with suitable handles or heads, with a date, year, etc., of a form and manner adapted for use, the circumference not exceeding that of a round box adapted for use, the circumference not exceeding in the size described in class No. 1.

Class 3. Circular marking stamps of base metal, or of equal durability, of the same size as in Class No. 1, with the name of the office and State, with type for month and days of principal type metal, in blocks of suitable size and figures, with thumb screws and handles the same as described in Class No. 2.

Class 4. Marking stamps for foreign mails similar to those now in use in the Postoffices at New York, Philadelphia and Boston, U. S., or of any other style adapted to the above purpose.

Also, the following rating stamps to correspond with the circular stamps in Classes 1, 2 and 3 in material, [illegible] workmanship, and such other rating stamps as may be required, as may be proposed on, at the discretion of the Department. If the style or material described in any of the classes be rejected, the price asked for rejected is to be given in the same proportion, viz:

	Number for Proposals
Paid	1 cents
Due	2 "
Missed	Due 2 cents
Forwarded	Dues 2 "
Postoffice Business, free	Due 5 "
Advertised	10 "
Necessitous	15 "
Ship	20 "
Held for postage	Paid 5 "
	P. D. 10 "
	D. 15 "
	P. D. 20 "

Proposals for improved or patented stamps, with suitable rates for the middle and small offices, or with plans to perfect the service, or with other improvements will be considered.

The right to change or alter the style of the stamps described in each class, upon reasonable terms, is reserved to the Postmaster General.

Proposals will be received for furnishing the whole of the above circular marking stamps, or for each class separately.

Stamps will be ordered for the different classes in order, according to such rules and regulations as may hereafter be adopted by the department.

Models of the stamps must accompany the proposals.

Each bidder must furnish with his proposals evidence of his ability to execute with his bid.

Sufficient sureties will be required to a contract, and the stamps must be delivered at the department at the expense of the contractor.

Proposals must be endorsed on the outside of the envelope with "Proposals for Postoffice Marking Stamps," and addressed to the "Chief of the Appointment Bureau," Montgomery, Ala.

JOHN H. REAGAN,
Postmaster General.

ap 22

PROPOSALS FOR MAIL LOCKS AND KEYS.

CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA,
POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,
Montgomery, March 27th, 1861.

SEALED PROPOSALS will be received at this Department until 12 o'clock M., the 1st day of May next, for furnishing for the service of the Postoffices in the following States, viz: Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri, Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia, and Territories of Indian, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nebraska, Kansas, Dakota, Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Colorado, and Minnesota, with KEYS, the following descriptions of Locks, viz:

Brass Mail Locks, with Keys, of the usual pattern.

Iron Mail Locks, with Keys, of the usual pattern.

The Locks and Keys must be of superior workmanship and adapted to the service, in the opinion of competent judges, and be free from all defects and liable to be promptly detected by the Postmaster General, or his chief clerk, in the exercise of a sound discretion, to be unfit for the service, or inferior to the specimens of Locks and Keys, which may be submitted with the proposals herein invited.

Bidders are required to furnish a sufficient number of Locks and Keys, to enable them to make their proposals, and to be prepared to deliver at this Department, on the first day of May next, the number which shall have been awarded to them, and to have the balance of the contract to be ready for delivery at the expiration of the time specified in the contract, which will be a period beyond the 1st of July for the delivery of the whole.

A decision on the bids will be made on or before the 10th day of May next, and the successful bidders will be required to enter into contract with the Department within ten days after the receipt of notice of the award. But bids will be rejected which do not specify a period beyond the 1st of July next for the delivery of supplies.

The Proposals should be addressed to the "Chief of the Contract Bureau," Postmaster Department, Montgomery, Ala.

JOHN H. REAGAN,
Postmaster General.

ap 22 d

PROPOSALS FOR POSTAGE STAMPS.

CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA,
POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,
Montgomery, March 27, 1861.

SEALED PROPOSALS will be received at this Department until 12 o'clock, M., the 1st day of May next, for furnishing for the Postoffices in the following States, viz: Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri, Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia, and Territories of Indian, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nebraska, Kansas, Dakota, Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Colorado, and Minnesota, with the following descriptions of Postage Stamps, viz:

Prepaid Postage Stamps, of the usual style and form, of the following denominations, viz: 1, 2, 5, 10 and 20 cents.

Postage Stamps to be used for prepaid letters, of the following denominations, viz: 5, 10 and 20 cents.

Postage Stamps, of the usual style and form, of the following denominations, viz: 1, 2,