ruptions upon us, which, as monarchies, they could make, and hence their reasons for interdicting our acknowledged right under the public law—of arming our commercial marine in any contest in which we might be engaged. Great Britain had felt the wounds of this instrumentality in our last struggle with her, in vindication of our maritime rights. The sincerity of the Paris declarations in regard to private property on the high seas was brought to the test by Mr. Marcy's amendment, which, in fact, revealed the real purpose in regard to the first point of the Paris Conferences, which was to disable us of that formidable means of defense which had, in our war of 1812, rendered such signal service. The uninterrupted peace and prosperity which have marked our national progress since this last period had rendered the American public mind insensible to the urgent necessity of definite, fixed, and publicly recognized international legislation upon the question of their maritime and neutral rights, until the present extraordinary conjuncture of public affairs, which now disturbes us at home, and convulses and threatens the world abroad. Our domestic complications rendered it necessary that we should have, at an early day, a distinct understanding with the commercial Powers of the Old World in relation to the rights of neutrals. This policy has been pressed with all the duty and ability that becomes a great and powerful nation. At an early period in our domestic difficulties, it became important to disable the unscrupulous neutral Powers from aiding or abetting the Rebel flag to prey upon the commerce of the United States. To this end, the Secretary of State of the United States addressed a circular to the Ministers of the United States at Great Britain, France, Prussia, Austria, Belgium, Italy, and Denmark, directing each of them to ascertain whether it was disposed to enter into negotiations for the accession of the United States to the declaration of the Paris Congress, at the same time expressing the President's approval of the Marcy amendment; yet, in consideration of the changed condition of public affairs, and in view of the raising on the standard of revolt, proposing a convention on the subject of the rights of belligerents and neutrals, in which the United States expressed a willingness to become a party to the Paris stipulations, pure and simple. At as early a period as the 10th of April, 1861, the Department of State of the United States instructed Mr. Adams at London, "that the recognition of the so-called Confederate nations must be deemed equivalent to a deliberate resolution by her Majesty's Government that this American Government, which has so long constituted a sovereign nation, shall be now permanently dissolved, and cease to exist forever." The same dispatch being designed to remind the British Government that "the British empire itself is an aggregation of divers communities, which cover a large portion of the earth, and embrace one-fifth of its entire population. That some, at least, of these communities are held to their places in that system by bonds as fragile as the obligations of our own federal Union; that the strain will come time come which is to try the strength of these bonds, though it will be of a different kind from that which is trying the cords of our confederation." These admonitions of the hostile aspect in which a recognition by Great Britain of the seceded States, would be regarded by this Government was thus pointedly brought home to the mind of the British Minister of Foreign Affairs. The dispatch conveying them bears date fourteen days before that authorizing a renewal of the conference on the Paris modifications in 1856 of the public law. By a dispatch on the 21st of May, 1861, from the Secretary of State to our envoy at London, he was instructed to "desist from all intercourse whatever, unofficial as well as official, so long as it shall continue intercourse of either kind with the domestic enemies of this country; and, further, that British recognition would be British intervention, to create, within our territory, a hostile State, by overthrowing this republic." On the 21st of May, 1861, our Minister opened, with due formality, to Lord John Russell, the proposal to negotiate in regard to neutrals in time of war, stating that the necessary powers had been transmitted to him, with a form of convention, which he proposed to present if there was any disposition to pursue the matter. The British Foreign Secretary expressed his willingness to negotiate, but stated his desire to leave this subject in the hands of Lord Lyons at Washington, to whom, as he intimated, authority had been transmitted to assent to any modification of the only point in issue with the Government of the United States. This apparently clear, explicit, and frank understanding has a most remarkable sequel, which is pointedly sketched in our Minister's dispatch of the 12th of July, 1861, stating that his "prevailing feeling has been one of profound surprise at the course of the British Government throughout the present difficulty, to wit: First—It prepares, in the form of instructions to Lord Lyons, a paper to be presented to the Secretary of State of the United States, among other things, virtually asking him to concede the principles laid down in the declaration of Congress of Paris in 1856. Second—When in obedience to Mr. Adams's instructions he proposes to offer a *project* to Lord John Russell, actually designed to do the very thing desired, he is told that directions have already been sent out to Lord Lyons to arrange the matter on the basis proposed by the American Government, of the three articles, omitting the fourth altogether. Third—Lord Lyons expresses the opinion to the Secretary of State of the United States that his instructions do not authorize him to enter into a convention with the United States. Fourth—When, concurrently with these events, Mr. Dayton, at Paris, proposes to negotiate on the same business with France, Mr. Adams is informed that the proposal has been communicated to the Ministry in London, and that no definite conclusion has been arrived at. Mr. Adams, in the courtly language of diplomacy, observes, "that a more remarkable series of misunderstandings has seldom come within his observation;" he might, and, in strict truth, that more remarkable transversation, on the part of Great Britain, was never found in the records of diplomacy. Mr. Adams was slow to understand that the Marcy proposition inadmissible, but as he was instructed not to insist upon it, Lord Russell proposed to take a copy of the *project* of the convention for the consideration of his colleagues. The result of that consideration is known in Lord Russell's communication, dated July 31, 1861, twelve days after the battle of Bull Run, in which he expresses his readiness "to carry on the negotiations as soon as the necessary arrangements can be perfected in London and Paris, so that the conventions may be signed simultaneously at these two capitals." Yet coupling with that statement the following remarkable passage: "I need scarcely add that, on the part of Great Britain, the engagement will be prospective, and will not invalidate anything already done." Here is the first glimmering intimation of the ulterior purposes of Great Britain, by the assumption of a position unfriendly to the dignity and interests of the United States. Mr. Adams, in reference to this sentence, in his dispatch of August 2, 1861, states that he must frankly admit that he does not understand the meaning of this last paragraph. Our Minister, however, is not suffered long to remain in ignorance of the real purpose of the British Secretary. The unfortunate occurrence of July 21, 1861, in the vicinity of Washington, had ripened the purposes of the British Secretary, as we find in his note of August 19, 1861, to the Foreign Office, to Mr. Adams, to which he asks, upon signing the convention according to Adams's draft, embodying the articles of the Convention of Paris, to append the following extraordinary declaration:

"In affixing his signature to the convention of this day between Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, and the United States of America, the Earl Russell declares, by order of her Majesty, that her Majesty does not intend thereby to undertake any engagement which shall have any bearing or direct or indirect, on the internal differences now prevailing in the United States."

In this conjuncture of public affairs there appeared, at the close of the month of August, 1861, a publication in *The London Globe*, dated more than four weeks previous, at the Foreign Office, strictly in confidence, from Lord Russell to Mr. Edwards, stating the then proposed annexation of the territory of the Dominican State to the dominions of Spain. It is in hooted phrases of warm and friendly tenor, yet sleeping out of the way offendly to animadvert upon, and speak of our country as in a state of disruption. The noble Lord acquiesces in the statement in these terms: "That there is no probability at present of any positive resistance to the measure, either by the Northern or Southern Confederation in North America." Mark the words. We can best illustrate the great injustice here done us by assuming like expressions on the part of our Government, when the question of recognition was agitated by the O'Connell influence, in 1846, to an extent that threatened the separation of the United Kingdom; yet earlier, when the Canadas were in revolt in 1837 and 1838, seeking independence; and at another period more recent, when the Anglo-Indian Empire, with over 150,000,000 of people, alien in race and in religion, shaken to the foundation by the storm of war, had circumstances existed as they did exist, in which we were in diplomatic correspondence with Spain, and we referred to Ireland as a separate kingdom or protectorate, or to the Canadas as an independent sovereignty, or to the Rajas of India as *de facto* authorities, when the English were falling before them, what would have been the spirit and purpose of such a reference but one of hostility and congratulation at the supposed approaching disintegration of the British Empire? We asked to become a party to the humane principles of public law embodied in the Paris declarations to which we had originally been invited to become parties, to which forty-six different nations had become a party, including Hayti, and German Principalities so inconsiderable as not to be even noticeable upon the map of the commercial world. But this was denied unless coupled with the humiliating condition not required of even the most inconsiderable of any of the other contracting parties. It is a matter of historical and universal notoriety that the French crown has been in controversy for the last half century between three great dynasties—the princes of the elder Bourbon line; those of the Louis Philippe; the third, and the now successful one, in the imperial dynasty of Napoleon. Suppose, in the conferences at Paris, in 1856, the British Government had coolly suggested to the French Emperor the importance, in the event of an outbreak in France, and conflict for the throne, that it must be understood that those declarations, then signed on the part of Great Britain, should have no bearing upon such contingencies as those to which I have referred, there would be no difficulty in reaching the conclusion that the amicable relations between Great Britain and France would be at an end—an insult that would not have been forgiven by the French Emperor or the French people. The United States are not, however, without a moral triumph in this respect. The principles for which they had contended and formally proposed in 1854, and in the earliest periods of our history, have triumphed over the irregular and arbitrary principles contended for and practiced by Great Britain during the wars of the French Revolution. Those arbitrary exactions led to our struggle in 1812; but they finally practically gave way in the opening of the Crimean war, with the dread of conflict with this Republic, had the attempt been made to force them upon us as a neutral and independent Power. We had, at the outset of our difficulties, given as a prominent reason for our proposed adherence to the Paris declarations, the fact that a misguided portion of our people had raised the standard of revolt, and declared their purpose of inviting privateers to prey upon the commerce of the Union. This reason was assigned by us as far back as the 24th of April, 1861; yet, to the 31st of July, in the same year, the slightest intimation had not been given of any dissent or objection on the part of the British Government. The dispatches of a Mr. Bunch, British Consul at Charleston, when captured by the vigilance of our sea police, revealed the fact that he was in close and intimate intercourse with the authorities of the revolting States. He communicated the fact that the British authorities had approached the Rebel Government, seeking their acquiescence in the principle that the neutral flag covering neutral goods was to be respected. Upon this discovery our Government demanded the recall of this Mr. Bunch (of iniquity.) The British Secretary declined, however, to accede to this request; and our Government, on the 23d of October, 1861, determined to revoke the exequatur of the Consul, "who has not only been the bearer of communications between the insurgents and a foreign government, in violation of our laws, but has abused equally the confidence of the two governments by reporting, without the authority of his Government, and in violation of their own policy, as well as of our national rights, that the proceeding in which he was engaged was in the nature of a treaty with the insurgents, and the first step toward the recognition by Great Britain of their sovereignty." Upon the instant of the Trent affair and the capture of the two Rebel emissaries, our Government dispatched advices to our Minister at London that the capture was unauthorized; and, upon the formal application of the British Government, these representatives of the revolted States would be surrendered. In this our Government rested their action upon the great American doctrines of public law, which we have constantly asserted since the origin of the Government. The dispatch of Earl Russell, in acknowledging their release, attempts to controvert the positions of our Government, as submitted in the able dispatch of our Secretary of State. Lord Russell, in his letter to the Liverpool Shipowners' Association, responds to that burst of apparent indignation, with which *The London Times* seeks to animadvert upon the action of our Government, by closing, for the time being, through the agency of a stone blockade, the rebellious City of Charleston. This stone drift, a temporary expedient, designed to be corrected as occasion and convenience may suggest, and when the rights of all concerned shall demand it, is an exceedingly limited affair, to be brought up in the form of such an indictment. Let us see whether we have not, in the history of this great public censor, abundant evidence to demonstrate that it is a familiar practice in maritime war. As early as 1804, in a dispatch dated February 9, of that year, marked "most confidential," from Lord Hobart, in Downing street, to the Controller of the British Navy, measures were taken by the King's command for secretly choking up with stone the entrance into the harbor of Boulogne, in France, as Richelieu, the great statesman, had done in 1628, by blocking up the harbor of Rochelle for the distance of nearly a mile. When the British people were waging a war against the thirteen colonies, they sunk stone obstructions in the channel at Savannah, Georgia, which remain to this hour. In 1807 the British Admiral Lewis, upon leaving the narrow entrance at Alexandria, Egypt, sunk five ships loaded with stone. At a still later period, within sight of the present hour, Lord Nasier, during the Crimean war, recommended the sinking of rocks, to prevent any intercourse with the harbor of Cronstadt. During the progress of that war the Russians themselves choked up the harbor of Sevastopol, to prevent the destruction on that side of the fortifications by the combined fleets of France and England. The present exposition of British opinion, therefore, was unknown in 1779, 1804, 1807, and 1854, for then they did those very acts, and justified them as principles of public law, which they now denounce in our case as barbarous crimes. Pending the struggle in which we are engaged to preserve intact the constitutional liberties of the American people, until recent events connected with the success of our arms demonstrated our ability to settle and adjust our own domestic differences if left to ourselves, foreign intervention has been repeatedly threatened. Our condition has been assimilated to that of the Turks when engaged in civil strife with Greece, resulting in the severance of the latter by armed intervention from the Turkish Power, and the destruction of the Turkish fleet in the Bay of Navarino. This intervention has already been extended to distracted and unfortunate Mexico. In my humble judgment it is the duty of the whole American people to protest against the introduction of such intervention in the administration of any people, living on any portion of the Western hemisphere, as alike dangerous to our peace and safety. After the overthrow of the great Napoleon, the despotic powers in Europe put forth the pretension of interfering in the internal affairs of France. This was done at Troppau and Laybach; but Lord Castlereagh protested in behalf the British nation. In 1823 the Congress of Verona interfered in the internal Government of Spain. Mr. Canning, however, declared that the principles laid down by the Allies in that respect struck at the very existence and vitals of the British Constitution. If, under all these circumstances, intervention be meditated, and our lawful and effective blockade, in accordance with the sound principles of international law, attempted to be broken by any power or combination whatever, they must count the cost of war with a spirited and independent people, flushed by recent overwhelming victories, with 700,000 armed men now in the field, and a country larger than all Europe, desired, sooner or later, to exercise a controlling influence in the affairs of mankind.

GEN. MITCHEL AT BOWLING GREEN.

The Bowling Green (Ky.) correspondent of *The Cincinnati Commercial* says:

"Gen. Mitchel may be a 'star-gazer' and a 'philosopher of the Utopian school;' but there is no doubt he is a man of energy. He made the forced march from Cave City to this place, I am pretty certain, without orders. He could not confer with Gen. Buell by telegraph, and on information of interest he pushed on with the intention of taking Bowling Green and getting the order afterward. The consequence of his rapid march has been—I cannot tell the whole—hundreds of dwellings along the road have been saved from destruction by fire; families have been preserved from destruction and robbery. Five locomotives and numerous cars were the spoils which the bursting of a few shells compelled the Rebels to relinquish. Instead of destroying the whole city, only the depots and bridges at this point were burned. For this regard man thanks' to the energetic star-gazer, who makes forced marches as if his men were perpetual motion machines, the secret of whose movements was the hidden and mysterious spring of military ardor that inspires the patriot marching on the foe."

NAVAL.

The United States steamers Iroquois, Quaker City, and Anderson were at St. Thomas on the 3d inst.

FROM CALIFORNIA.

THE GREAT FLOOD AND ITS EFFECTS.

From Our Own Correspondent.

SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 1, 1862.

I had hoped that I should be able to write you by this steamer that the great California flood of 1862 had passed away and become part of the things that were, but I am disappointed, for the waters still continue to be at flood hight, and California still suffers, and is unable to ascertain her loss.

By previous steamers you have news of events until within the last ten days, but a brief recapitulation may be not out of place. The season has been wet beyond example since the American conquest. We divide our year into a "rainy season" and a "dry season;" but the amount of rain which usually falls within twelve months at San Francisco is only 22 inches, or about one-half of the rain-fall in New-York. Your Winters and Springs are as wet as ours; our Summer and Fall are perfectly dry, while yours are nearly as wet as the other half of the year. In ordinary Winters we have several months of clear and beautiful weather; indeed, it is the opinion of many persons that the Winter is the pleasantest season in San Francisco, because then we are free from the fogs, strong winds and dust which prevail during the Summer.

This, however, has proved to be a most extraordinary season. The rain began on the 10th November, and continued almost without intermission until the 22d ult., a period of seventy-three days, and the fury was still worse than the continuity. The rain-fall in this city measured thirty-six perpendicular inches, and the rainy season is not yet half over. In average seasons more than half the rain comes after the 1st February. There is no telling what is to become of us, if the common proportion is to be maintained this year. During November the rains fell gently and the water did not rise to an unusual hight, but on the 9th December, Sacramento City was completely overflowed, and since then the water has been standing from a foot to ten feet deep over more than three fourths of the area of the city. On the 11th January anothe her great flood came, and it still prevails. The water rose to be three or four feet deep in every street in Sacramento; it stood several feet deep in every street of Stockton; it covered nearly every street in Marysville; it flooded and swept away a multitude of other smaller towns; and it covered the basin of the Sacramento to a depth varying from two to ten feet over an area 150 miles long to 20 wide.

The basin of the Sacramento is the heart of California, extending north and south from 35° to 41° 30', a distance of 450 miles, and east and west 100 miles from the summit of the coast range to that of the Sierra Nevada, which two ranges unite at each end of the basin which lies parallel with the coast, and has a shape like a finger, and an area equal to that of the State of Ohio. The eastern border of this basin is a range of mountains the comb of which is in few places less than 6,000 feet above the sea—in many places reaching 8,000 feet. The slope to the west is very long, and a wide surface is presented to catch rain and snow, and so effectually are they caught that scarcely any moisture is carried across them by the winds from the Pacific. In the north and north-west there are also high mountains, including Mt. Shasta at the head of the Sacramento River, a peak 14,000 feet high, of which 5,000 are covered with a garment of everlasting white. All these immense basin, and all the rivers running down from these snow-mountains, have but one outlet, and that is where the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers, after uniting in the middle of the basin, one coming from the north and one from the south, break through the coast mountains in latitude 29°, and make a passage to the Pacific. There are two narrow passages for the water in its course to the ocean—one at the Golden Gate, or entrance to the Bay of San Francisco, a mile wide, and another at the Straits of Carquinez, three quarters of a mile wide, at the town of Benicia, thirty miles further inland. At each place the water has broken through a ridge of the coast mountains. A basin containing 45,000 square miles, in which rain falls simultaneously at every point, and in which the outlet is at equal distances from the two ends, and the streams mountain torrents that send their waters down without delay—such basin has an outlet only three-fourths of a mile wide! Such are some of the elements out of which to calculate the possibilities of flood in the Sacramento basins. We Californians never made the calculation before this year; our attention was not drawn to the subject; we supposed that the sands dried up during the Summer, would absorb nearly all the rain that could fall. In addition to the elements already given, there is another—the amount of rain which falls on the sides of the Sierra Nevada is vastly greater than at San Francisco, or in any low land in the State. During the time that 36 inches of rain fell in this city, 101 inches—nearly three times as much—fell in Sonora, Tuolumne County, about 2,500 feet above the sea. We may safely say that the amount of water is doubled on the Sierra Nevada for every 2,000 feet of elevation. It may fall in the shape of snow, but snow melts, and never to make itself felt in the rivers. Nearly one-half of the Sacramento basin consists of the slopes of mountains, and probably one-fourth of the basin is 2,000 feet or more above the level of the sea. Now, at Sonora the fall of water was eight feet. It is therefore, I think, not extravagant to suppose the average amount of water which has fallen through the basin since the 10th of November to be five feet. The first foot was absorbed by the soil, which had been exposed during the driest Summer on record to uninterrupted and unmitigated sunshine for six months. Then came four feet of water, falling over an area of 45,000 square miles to escape through an outlet three-quarters of a mile wide. But at that outlet the tide rises six feet, so that half the time the outlet would be interrupted.

The water rushed down from the mountains into the plain—into the lowest part of the plain, which is in the center of the basin, and whose area I have estimated at 150 miles long and 20 wide—3,000 square miles. This is just a fifteenth part of the basin. Multiply 4 by 15, and we learn that enough water fell to cover the district near the confluence of the Sacramento and San Joaquin, with a flood 60 feet deep.

And yet it surprises me that the water does not escape through the Straits of Carquinez; for west of those Straits, the water is not perceptibly higher than at other times. The distance from Sacramento City to the Strait of Carquinez is not more than 60 miles in a direct line, nor more than 70 across the water-covered plain, but the current follows the channel of the river, and by that route the distance is 90 miles. Within 30 miles of Benicia the water stood for weeks 12 feet or more above the usual level. So strong is the current from the Sacramento basin that there has been for weeks no perceptible flood-tide—no current inward from the sea—in the bays connecting with the ocean at the Golden Gate. The water is thick with mud in all the ways, and extends 15 miles out to sea.

It is impossible to ascertain the damage done. *The Morning Call* of this city estimates it at $75,000,000. I would not put it over $10,000,000. I am not confident that it will amount to $5,000,000 above benefits. The rains have done much good. They have insured good crops upon high lands. They have enabled miners to wash out much gold in dry ravines which had remained unproductive through an ordinary Winter. They have supplied a most abundant crop of grain throughout the State, and especially in the northern districts. They have raised the level of many lands, and fitted them for cultivation.

In Sacramento the damage is most apparent. The beautiful gardens, the pleasant homes, are nearly all wrecked. In the eastern and southern districts of the city there are deposits of sand from three to six feet deep. Houses are carried away, and rain stares at you from every side. Dead cows, horses, pigs, sheep and chickens float in the water and stick in the mud. The flood was on the 21st ult. four feet and a half deep in the yard of the State House, and that is one of the highest spots in the city. It is not known who is to be done to protect the place. All counseling is confusion.

The Legislature was unable to do any business in Sacramento, so they adjourned and came to this place for the remainder of the session. They are sitting in the old Merchants' Exchange, opposite the Custom-House. A bill to bring down the State offices failed. A bill is now under consideration to stop all work on the new State-House, commenced at Sacramento. A strong party will urge the permanent removal to this city, which has great advantages over Sacramento.

Stockton has suffered severely, and the water is now standing in her streets, but she will emerge and be strong. She has no debt, and she can easily build a levee six feet high, and that will suffice to protect her.

Marysville has suffered no serious damage within the last ten days.

Rio Vista, a lively little town of thirty houses, on the bank of the Sacramento, near the head of Suisun Bay, has been entirely swept away, no trace of it being left, and a new town is to be built on some high ground not far from the old site.

On the 22d ult., the Los Angeles River rose to flood hight, and did much damage in the town to vineyards and gardens. *The Star* estimates the losses as follows:

Mr. Moulton	$10,000	Dr. Huber	$1,000
Mrs. T. J. White	5,000	Others	1,500
Mr. Wolfskill	2,500		
Hammel & Messer	5,000	Total	$25,000

There is a rumor that the town of Anaheim is washed away, but it has been contradicted, and I am satisfied from the conformation of the land there that the rumor is incorrect.

In regard to the losses in most of the towns, you had full confirmation by the last steamer, or as full as is now attainable.

But the country has suffered more than the towns. In the towns there were high houses, abundant provisions, a multitude of men, boats, and property which could be carried into second stories, or placed in boxes, and thus saved from the flood. In the country, on the other hand, the houses were mostly of one story, remote from each other; men were few, there were no boats, provisions were scarce, and the chief wealth of the people consisted in fences, that were swept away; in cattle, that were chilled, drowned, or starved to death; in fruit trees, that were killed; and in plantings, that were smothered under a deep deposit of cold mud.

The Sacramento valley, or that part of it now flooded, contains about half of the farmers and cultivated land of the State. In the following table, I show the principal counties, with the population, taxable property, and bushels of wheat and barley grown in each for last year:

	Pop.	Taxable prop.	Wheat.	Barley.
Sacramento	24,795	$12,076,063	142,069	214,[illegible]
Yuba	15,671	6,187,773	99,[illegible]	347,180
Butte	12,107	3,811,119	160,000	253,000
Sutter	3,293	2,532,324	169,235	289,225
Tehama	4,044	913,570	215,500	180,400
Yolo	4,710	2,156,482	240,000	700,000
Colusa	2,274	.....	100,000	291,000
Solano	7,170	.....	.....	.....
Amador	10,933	2,616,872	46,569	51,006
San Joaquin	5,434	4,5[illegible],375	1,022,829	1,203,625
Stanislaus	2,245	846,238	43,[illegible]00	95,675
Total (11 Co.'s)	94,179	$35,568,756	2,265,322	3,716,190

Not one of these counties is entirely covered by the flood, but the greater part of all, save Amador, are under water, and especially the cultivated portions of them. In addition to these, portions of Contra Costa, Placer, and Merced are also flooded.

These eleven counties contain one-fourth of the population of the State, the entire figure being 380,000, about one-fourth the taxable property, the whole amount having been assessed last year at $144,000,000; one half of the wheat-fields, and three-fourths of the barley-fields, the total annual yield of the State in each grain being about 5,000,000 bushels.

A grave question has arisen, whether these counties can produce any grain this year. If not, we shall have to import wheat. Our crop will necessarily be short. If the water should soon fall, and there were means of protecting the fields from the cattle, almost as much wheat and barley could be grown as ever; but the people have no money to build fences, which cost from $100 to $350 per mile—often costing much more than the land. Besides, the farmers have no time to build fences. It is proposed, therefore, to pass laws that fences shall be unnecessary about grain fields, and persons owning cattle must keep them up, or have them held responsible for all the damage they may do while trespassing upon the lands of other people.

The following lives are reported lost in the high water:

Robbins, Thomas, at Knight's Ferry, on the 10th.
Beering, Edward, at Jacksonville, Tuolumne, on the 10th.
Twenty Chinese at Jacksonville, on the 10th.
Proctor, John, at Two-Mile Bar, on the Stanislaus, on the 10 h.
Five dead bodies found in the American River at Norris's Bridge, on the 12th.
Kelly, Judge, a negro boot-black, at Sacramento City, on the 12th.
A Chinaman, near Sutterville, on the 13th.
Five Chinamen, at Uniontown, El Dorado County, on the 10th.
Marshall, Buell; Learned, Henry; Johnson, George A., killed by a snow-slide caused by the heavy rains at Excelsior Hill, Sierra County, on the 9th.
Cleveland, Calvin, crushed by a tunnel-cave at Nevada, caused by heavy rains on the 11th.
Wood, William, a Half-Moon Bay, on the 11th.
Carr, Mrs., and a hired man, 14 miles east of Sacramento City, on the 11th.
A Frenchman, at Sacramento City, on the 11th.
A woman and two children, at Deytown, N. T., on the 11th.
Donovan, Michael, at Islais Creek, on San Jose Road, on the 12th.

Of the above number, 26 were Chinese, 1 negro, and 19 whites.

To this list is to be added the following:

Reid, A. J., Shasta County.
Man and two women, names unknown, at Jajas Creek, Santa Cruz.
Unknown boy, Santa Clara.
Lerin, Elodige, Tassajos Valley, Contra Costa County, Jan. 19.
Mexican, named Manuel, deck hand steamer Visalia, Sacramento River, Jan. 19.
Four men and two women, Carson River, N. T., Jan. 10.
Bagley, Horace G., in the San Joaquin, Jan. 12.
Maguire, Barney, Stockton, Jan. 20.
Tryon, Charles A., and Taylor, Wm., Deadwood, Jan. 12.
Buel, Giles A., Flood, Morris, and Jones, Samuel, Boston Bar, Jan. 11.
Kirne, Nicholas, near Downieville, on the 12th inst.
A soldier, name unknown, Camp Union, near Sacramento, on the 21st inst.

The Alta of yesterday gives the following account of a wreck in the harbor:

"On Wednesday evening the American clipper ship Flying Dragon, loaded with coal, from Newcastle, New South Wales, was lost in the bay by striking Arch Rock, below Alcatraz. She was beating up the harbor, the weather being thick, and, as we understand, came to another below the rock, but a strong tide was running, which caused her to drag, until she struck. Every effort was made to save her, but with at avail, as she sunk and canted over, leaving her masts out of water. The Flying Dragon left here about six months since, with a cargo of grain for Australia, and was on her return voyage. A number of boats put off to her relief, as soon as it was ascertained the vessel was ashore; but no help could save her, as the water gained too fast to be relieved by pumping. The captain and crew saved most, if not all their effects. The wreck was sold yesterday noon for $855. We understand her vessel and cargo were insured, but for what amount we could not learn.

WASHINGTON AND GEORGETOWN DIRECTORY.—We have received from the publisher and compiler, Mr. Thomas Hutchinson, of Washington and this city, a copy of this useful publication, for 1862. It appears to have been prepared with care, and in addition to the list of residents, of which the increase is about 2,000 since the previous publication, there is a good deal of interesting and valuable information about Government affairs and Government officers, places of public interest, churches, literary and charitable associations, and so forth.

CITY ITEMS.

Some people, whose sympathy for everything pertaining to Slavery overpowers all other considerations, and some presses, whose opinions upon the subject are too well known to be particularized, have seen fit to censure the United States Marshal of this District for his dealings with Gordon, the slave-trader, on the day of his execution, alleging that he was unnecessarily harsh in hastening his execution, and contending, in fact, that he ought to have left him alone to die of poison self-administered, or to recover, as circumstances might determine. To all these carpings it is only necessary to adduce the facts. On Thursday, the prisoner was permitted to fix the hour at which he would be executed—2½ p. m.—solemnly pledging his word that he would not, in the mean time, make any attempt upon his life. He broke that promise; but the amount of poison which he took was insufficient to cause his death. Three medical officers were subsequently in attendance upon him, and whatever remedies were applied to his case were administered by their orders alone. The prisoner called for and drank largely of whisky; but, in consequence of his peculiar condition, it did not affect his mind in the least. He was clear-headed and rational to the last. To the last he was bitter and vindictive—as his speech against the U. S. District-Attorney, which he made after leaving his cell, standing up firmly in the prison, just before his execution, without assistance, and speaking it in a loud, clear voice, sufficiently proved. After he had broken his pledge—a pledge made under peculiarly solemn circumstances—the Marshal considered that the prisoner had no further claim upon his consideration, and therefore ordered the execution to proceed without delay, as soon as the period assigned for it by the Court had arrived. It is not true that the man was dying of poison, nor that he was drunk when he was hanged; on the contrary, he was sober, and constantly gaining in strength, and his weakness under the gallows was rather the result of cowardice than anything else. Had the execution been delayed, from the quantity of liquor which the man had taken it is quite probable that in a couple of hours, with the abatement of his nervous excitement, he would have been quite intoxicated from its effects, and therefore far less fitted to meet his fate.

BULL'S HEAD.—The beef cattle market for the week closed yesterday better than upon any Wednesday of this Winter for the drover, all the bullocks selling that were offered, without any decline from the opening prices, which were in advance of the previous week fully half a cent a pound upon the net weight of beef. This is partly owing to the limited number in market this week (3,329), and partly to some purchases made for shipping and for army and navy contracts, and partly to a "panic" that appeared to make butchers fear that the city was about to suffer a dearth of beef cattle. We assure them that the fear is a very groundless one—that the Great West is full of cattle and corn, and that beef will not be scarce nor high in 1862. Therefore, those who already charge 18 cents a pound need not hurry to charge 20 cents because it has risen half a cent this week.

AMERICAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WORLD'S FAIR.—About 300 parcels, weighing in the aggregate nearly 150 tuns, and comprising a great variety of our most ingenious and useful inventions, left this port, on Tuesday, in the British screw steamship Stella, for exhibition at the forthcoming World's Fair. Contributors who were too late to ship articles by the Stella, can send them on or before the 11th of March, and still be in time to enter them at the Exhibition. It is understood that the President will appoint Col. Johnson as the special commissioner (without pay) to represent this country at the Fair. Mr. Holmes, the general agent and manager for the American exhibitors, will leave in the steamer of Saturday, to attend to the delivery and arrangement of the articles.

LEGISLATIVE INVESTIGATIONS.—The Military Contract Committee, better known as "The Shoddy Committee" of the State Legislature, of which Mr. McMillan is Chairman, resumed their sessions yesterday, at the St. Nicholas Hotel, and examined several officers connected with the State Military Department. The Committee will make a strict examination of the contractors who were engaged in the manufacture of clothing for our soldiers during the early part of the war, with a view of ascertaining how and by whose connivance the "Shoddy" swindle was perpetrated. The Committee on Privileges and Elections of the Legislature now in session at the Astor House, continued their investigations yesterday, and examined several of the city officials, among whom were a number of the employees in the City Inspectors' Department. The result of their examinations could not be ascertained, and will not be made known until the Committee present their report to the Assembly.

HEROES OF ROANOKE.—We have already approvingly noticed the fact that a movement is on foot to bestow medals upon the Hawkins Zouaves, 9th New-York Volunteers, for their gallantry at the battle of Roanoke Island. Since then subscription papers have been issued to raise the necessary funds, one of which will be found in our publication office. It runs as follows:

HONOR TO THE BRAVE—MEDAL FOR HAWKINS'S ZOUAVES.—We, the undersigned citizens and daughters of New-York, who have heard with admiration of the daring bayonet charge of Hawkins's New-York Zouaves along the bloody causeway and over the Rebel ramparts at Roanoke, and who feel desirous of doing honor to the noble youths who are sustaining the pride of our city in the battle-field, do hereby subscribe the following sums set opposite our names, for the purpose of purchasing a medal to be presented to each member of said regiment. Subscription list and money to be returned to the office of James B. Whiting, esq., No. 132 Nassau street.

WIDENING WORTH STREET.—The work of widening Worth street, from Broadway to Hudson street, has commenced in good earnest, and yesterday the first encroachment for many years was made upon the New-York Hospital grounds. The demolition of the northerly wall was commenced, and a large gang of workmen with horses and carts were engaged in digging away the earth and leveling the ground even with the street. With a view to the widening of this street, the owners of the property on the south-west corner of Broadway and Worth street, built their fine marble-front store recently erected in conformity with the new line. The magnificent warehouse of Claflin, Mellen & Co., between Church street and West Broadway, erected last Spring, was also set back about twenty-five feet from the old line. The engine-houses on the upper corner of the Hospital grounds, which were a nuisance and an eyesore to the neighborhood, were torn down some time ago. The remaining buildings to be removed in order to complete this improvement are for the most part old and rickety structures, and their demolition under any circumstances would involve no great loss. The widening, grading, and paving, will be completed during the ensuing Summer.

PERSONAL.—Lieut. Almar P. Webster, 9th Regiment N. Y. V. (Hawkins Zouaves) who was wounded in the brilliant charge of that regiment at Roanoke Island, has arrived in this city. He was, at the commencement of the rebellion, a member of the Sophomore Class in Columbia College, and the Sophomore Class in Columbia College, and among the first to volunteer. He was at the taking of Hatteras.

Mr. George F. Betts, Clerk of the United States District Court, late Lieutenant Colonel of the Ninth Regiment (Hawkins Zouaves), has resumed the duties of his office, and was in Court on Tuesday morning, on the return of process. Col. Betts took part in the battle of Roanoke Island, was with the head of the regiment in the charge of the Zouaves up the causeway, and was among the earliest of those who mounted the parapet.

COMMISSIONERS OF EMIGRATION.—There was no business of public importance transacted by this Board yesterday. It appears from the statement that there have arrived at this port since the 1st of January 2,589 emigrants. To the same date last year, 3,940. Receipts from all sources, $16,218 04. Disbursements, $11,255 14. Balance in bank $4,962 80.

THE ANNUAL ICE CROP.—The ice companies hereabout report that their harvest is over; that they have secured not much more than half a crop, owing to the unfavorableness of the weather this Winter, and that consumers will therefore have to pay an enhanced price for the refrigerative luxury next dog-days. As we have heard pretty much the same story for the past ten years, the prospect is not very appalling. Nevertheless, in view of the opening of the Southern market, and the immense demand which the chivalry down in Dixie will make for cooling cocktails and consoling cobblers, luxuries from which they have been too long debarred by Uncle Sam's blockade, we should not wonder after all if there was a rise in gelid goods about next July.

THE REPORT ABOUT GEN. SICKLES.—Capt. John T. Bruen, of the Excelsior Light Artillery, called yesterday to inform us that he had just received a telegraph dispatch from Washington, contradicting the rumor that Gen. Sickles had been shot the day previous by one of his men.

THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE UNION.—A call may be found in our publication office, for signatures, providing for a mass meeting at the Cooper Institute, on the 4th of March next, to express to the President and Congress the views of the citizens of New-York, relative to the proper measures to be adopted toward the Rebel States, with a view to securing permanent peace upon a righteous basis for the nation.

A COMPLIMENT TO COMMODORE STRINGHAM.—A Committee of the citizens of Brooklyn will meet at the Mansion-House, Hicks street, this evening, for the purpose of presenting a sword to Flag-Officer Stringham, as a token of appreciation by his fellow-citizens of his professional character and public services, and for his participation in the capture of the Rebel forts at Hatteras.

BURNSIDE'S EXPEDITION.—The schooner Emily will leave on Friday, the 28th inst., for Gen. Burnside's division, Hatteras Inlet, and Roanoke Island. All letters and papers sent to Bales, Hamilton & Co., No. 186 Chambers street, New-York, will be promptly forwarded.

A concert and literary entertainment will be given this evening at the Irving Hall, by the Myers sisters. We had the pleasure of hearing these young Misses a few evenings since at the residence of one of our distinguished citizens. Miss Louisa, a handsome young lady of about fifteen summers, and Miss Josephine, a little girl of eleven, recited the dialogue in the "Hunchback," between Julia and Helen, in a most charming and graceful manner. If they can sustain themselves in public as well as they did in a drawing-room, they cannot fail to meet with a decided success. They will recite the same dialogue this evening, and sing several pretty songs, and will be assisted in the entertainment by artists of note.

FIRE IN THIRD AVENUE.—About 5 o'clock on Tuesday evening, a fire broke out in the fifth story of the house No. 487 Third avenue, occupied by Mrs. Gleeson. Two children, who were alone in the room at the time, and who are supposed to have caused the fire, were rescued by the police, and most of the furniture was saved. The building was damaged to the amount of $500. Fully insured in the Pacific Insurance Company.

CORONERS' CASES.—Yesterday Patrick McDermott, a man 42 years of age, died from the effects of burns received last Monday night, while trying on a heap of shavings in the rear of his residence, No. 34 Mulberry street. It is suspected that his wife fired the shavings while he was asleep, and she