

New-York Daily Tribune

THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 1864.

To Correspondents. No notice can be taken of anonymous communications. Writers are intended for insertion must be authenticated by the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee for his good faith.

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NEWS OF THE DAY.

THE WAR.

We have Richmond papers to Monday last inclusive. Their war news is not important. Dispatches from Memphis, Ala., of the 23d, represent the Union force (Sherman's) making a retrograde movement. Their stories of the cavalry fighting in Northern Mississippi are about the same as ours from Memphis. Grant's movements bothered them, though they claim that his advance has been repulsed. They say that the Union force passed through Tunnel Hill on the 23d, and would not probably make a stand nearer than Chickamauga. Longstreet's retreat is partially confessed. A Mobile dispatch of the 23d says that fire was opened that day upon Fort Powell; six monitors and four gunboats shelled all day. The Florida affair is made much of, and with reason; but the Rebels concede severe losses on their side. Gen. Braxton Bragg has been appointed General-in-Chief, and is "charged with the conduct of the military operations of the army of the Confederacy." Forty-three deserters from the Union side had gone to work in the Wilmington, Conn. Mines, at their own request. Lieut. Cassin, U. S. Regulars, one of the escapees from Liberty, had been retaken. Thirty-one Union prisoners escaped while going from Richmond to Georgia, near Augusta. The editorials of the journals before us are full of brag about the bright prospects of the South and the desperation, demoralization, bankruptcy and utter hopelessness of the North.

Gen. Custer's cavalry expedition to the left of Lee's army has returned to the north side of the Rapidan, having accomplished the purpose intended. Not a man was killed; only 11 were wounded, and 9 captured. Gen. Custer's business was to make a diversion in favor of Kilpatrick, whose field was on the Rebel right. Custer had 1,500 men and a section of artillery. He went through Madison Court-House on Monday, crossed the Rapidan and the Rivanna, and went within three miles of Charlottesville. There the Rebels had lastly gathered a heavy force, and Custer wheeled about. Meanwhile, the Rebel cavalry had gathered in his rear, to the number of a whole brigade, and set about capturing his entire force, but by a series of brilliant movements, including some fine charges and sharp fighting, our men got safely off, having burnt the long bridge over the Rivanna, several mills and factories, taken 60 prisoners, many valuable horses, eight wagon loads of stores, six caissons, two fuses, &c. The horses belonged to the Rebel army, and had been put out to board, so as to be in good condition for the Spring campaign.

Gen. Butler has sentenced Geo. M. Bane and W. H. W. Hodges of Portsmouth, Va., to hard labor at Hatters, for fraudulent disposal of the funds of the Portsmouth Savings Bank and the Mechanics' Savings Bank of that city. Bane was cashier of the first named institution, and Hodges cashier of the latter. All the funds of the two banks, it seems, were sent to Richmond, and the two officers refused to divulge to the Bank Investigating Committee by whose authority the transfers were made. Gen. Butler has also ordered that the Rev. S. H. Wingfield be turned over to Col. Sawfile for work for three months at cleaning the streets of Norfolk and Portsmouth. The clergyman is charged with being an avowed Secessionist.

The President has directed that the sentences of all deserters who have been commuted by court-martial to death, and that have not been otherwise acted upon by him, be mitigated to imprisonment, during the war, at the Dry Tortugas, Florida.

The Provost-Marshal-General has published an official order requiring the draft to begin on the 10th inst. in all districts that had not filled their quota on the 1st inst. All volunteers calling before the draft commences will be credited.

The Rebels are in a strait about whisky. On the publication of the new Currency bill, whisky rose from \$80 to \$120 per gallon. Brown sugar was up to \$12 50 per pound by the hoghead, and none offering at that.

Twenty-six Rebel deserters from Tennessee, who have been confined in the Old Capitol for the past two months, have just taken the oath of allegiance.

It appears that the torpedo which sunk the Housatonic, off Charleston, was itself destroyed at the same time.

Kings County is doing well in raising troops. The Eagle says there are only about 500 men yet to raise. The Union says the present deficiency is 700.

The Senate yesterday unanimously confirmed the nomination of Gen. Grant as Lieutenant-General.

CONGRESS. SENATE, March 2.—Mr. Wilson reported a new bill to equalize the pay of soldiers in the United States army; also, a bill for the pay of the cadets in the United States Academy, and for other purposes. Mr. Sherman called up the bill to encourage emigration, and it was passed. Mr. Wilkinson rose to a personal explanation, in reply to Gov. Andrew's speech in Faneuil Hall, recently made. A long discussion followed, mainly about the army of the Potomac and its commanders. A message was received from the House, announcing the appointment of a new Committee of Conference of the Whisky bill. Mr. Grimes introduced a bill to amend the act to establish and equalize the grade of lieutenants. Mr. Wade introduced a bill for the repair and completion of certain public works on the lakes. A resolution to inquire into the causes of the late disaster in Florida was adopted. The Whisky bill was then taken up, and the Senate, by 25 yeas and 16 nays, refused to agree to the request of the House for an instructed Conference Committee. A motion to postpone the subject indefinitely was rejected. Finally, the Senate disagreed to the resolutions for instructing, and agreed to send a free Committee of Conference. After executive session the Senate adjourned.

HOUSE.—The House passed the Senate bill for military protection to overland emigrants to the Pacific States and Territories. Mr. Eldredge wanted to get the names of all persons arrested by military orders, but he was not granted. A bill to develop the mineral resources of the public domain was referred. The House took up the bill defining the jurisdiction of the Court of Claims not to include any claim against the United States growing out of the destruction of property by the army and navy engaged in the suppression of the Rebellion. An amendment was adopted providing that claims for quartermaster's stores and subsistence shall be examined by the Quartermaster and Commissary Departments, and if approved shall be paid. Sundry Commissioners and Solicitors are to be appointed to hear applications for compensation. Before finally voting on the bill the House adjourned.

LEGISLATURE. SENATE, March 2.—Bills were noticed for the more effectual punishment of drunkenness and vagrancy in New-York; to establish an asylum for Deafblinds in New-York; to amend the act creating a Department of Public Charities and Corrections in New-York; and bills were passed incorporating the State Island Navigation Bank, relative to the enforcement of judgment liens against real estate; incorporating the Richmond County Fire Department. Several bills were considered in Committee of the Whole; when the Senate adjourned.

ASSEMBLY.—A bill was passed relative to the ferriage of funeral processions between New-York and Long Island, bills were introduced to alter the map of New York; to incorporate the East India Telegraph Company; concerning the Erie Railroad; requiring the Third Avenue Railroad to extend their track; to incorporate the New-York Public Stock Exchange. Ad-journed.

NEWS FROM EUROPE. By the arrival of the steamship Danacous at Portland we have advices from Europe to Feb. 19, two days later than those previously received.

The arrangements for the departure of Archduke Maximilian for Mexico, via Paris, are said to be completed. The *Bonita* and *Stella* have come out in favor of Denmark.

The report of a battle between the Danes and the Prussians at Duppel, on Feb. 13, seems to be premature. The Danes, whose number is estimated at 40,000, were strengthening their defenses, and the Prussians preparing for an attack. It is said that the Prussians will occupy Jutland (the northernmost province of the mainland of the Danish monarchy) in case the Danes should continue to refuse the evacuation of the Island of Als.

At Ekensand, a light took place between a Danish monitor and the Austro-Prussian batteries, the monitor making an unsuccessful attempt to destroy the bridge erected by the Austro-Prussians. Thirty thousand Prussians are concentrated in the Suedovitz, the district of Schleswig just opposite Als.

The Spanish Government has chartered seven steamers to convey 4,000 troops to reinforce the Spanish army in Santo Domingo.

GENERAL NEWS. By the arrival of the Eagle at this port yesterday we have dates from Havana to Feb. 27, and from Mexico to Feb. 20. President Juarez has arrived at Monterey. The remainder of Uruga's force, to the number of 7,000 or 8,000, have rendezvoused at Santa Anita and Colima, but it was thought that they would not dare to attack Guadalajara, which is occupied by 3,000 French and "Reactionists." The report of an occupation of Zacatecas by the French was premature.

The election for charter officers of Poughkeepsie took place on Tuesday, and was in every way gratifying, the city giving a much larger Union majority than usual at charter elections. The Union majority on Justice of the Peace was 573. In the two upper wards Union Aldermen and Supervisors were elected; in the two lower the Democrats prevailed, as usual, but by a reduced majority.

José Gaston and C. A. Van de Linden were arrested in this city, on Wednesday, charged with forging Brazilian currency. A number of the counterfeit notes were found on them.

John U. Andrews, the draft rioter, was arraigned yesterday in the United States Court. He pleaded not guilty. It is supposed that the case will be moved for trial at an early day.

Joseph Ketchum, for a long time a prominent produce merchant of this city, died in Brooklyn on Monday evening.

A large hotel in Sedalia, Mo., was burned yesterday morning. Five persons were killed and many wounded in trying to escape. Other buildings were burned, the loss amounting in all to \$150,000.

The *Sonoma Democrat* says that great uneasiness prevails among the farmers throughout California concerning the crops. Very little grain has been planted, and prospects are gloomy indeed.

The Free-State party has triumphed in Louisiana. The Hon. Michael Mahan is chosen Governor by a majority of 3,005, on a vote of over 8,000.

Gold closed at 169@170, after selling all day at 159@162. Stocks before the Board were steady. At the Stock Exchange, Governments were firm and in demand. Border State Stocks steady. The stock market closes irregular, and as a whole lower. Government Securities are steady and sold in small amounts. Money is easy at 5@6 per cent on call, and stock houses are supplied in great abundance. Commercial paper is wanted at low interest, and is not to be had in any large amount.

The Senate did yesterday debate the Army of the Potomac, its campaigns and commanders, but nobody need read the report with expectation of finding new light thrown on any one point.

A resolution of inquiry into the Florida disaster was adopted yesterday in the Senate. That is very well, but the true method of inquiry in such a case is by court-martial, and we cannot suppose the matter is to be let pass without one.

Gen. Custer's cavalry expedition has returned this side of the Rapidan, having accomplished, according to our dispatch, its full purpose by effecting a diversion in favor of Gen. Kilpatrick—occupying Lee's attention on his left flank, reaching to within three miles of Charlottesville on the Virginia Central, and escaping various well-intended traps for his capture on his return. Interesting details of the movement will be found in another column.

Our dispatches give no news from Kilpatrick. A rumor placed him at Spotsylvania Court House on Monday. This village is 65 miles from Richmond. There is still another rumor that when last heard from he was within 18 miles of Richmond. As there is no communication by which such news could come, it is probable mere surmise. It is now assumed that Kilpatrick's destination is Richmond, and inasmuch as Custer's diversion near Charlottesville to favor Kilpatrick was successful, and as no news of return to the latter has been received, there seems to be reason for expecting something cheerful. But it is not well to be sanguine.

The House consumed yesterday in debate on a bill to limit the jurisdiction of the Court of Claims, adopting finally an amendment that, where losses have been occasioned by the seizure of property for the use of the army, claims for reimbursement shall be referred to the Quartermaster and Commissary-General, and that the certificate of either of those officers shall entitle the claimant to be paid. This, in effect, establishes a wholly new and utterly irregular tribunal, composed of officers whose other duties will make it impracticable for them to attend to these. It seems to us that the door opened to fraud is dangerously wide, and that, even with the best intentions on the part of those officers, the Treasury would be likely to suffer.

The *Syracuse Standard* is a journal that we desire and have hitherto been able to respect. We must ask its editor, therefore, to reconsider his unqualified assertion that

"In the first place, this *Tribune* repudiates the 'One Term' theory, as wrong and inexpedient in general principle. Here is reason in favor of Mr. Lincoln's re-nomination."

We must ask him to take that straight back.

THE WESTERN CAMPAIGNS. It is remarkable that in the files of Richmond papers received last night there is scarcely an allusion to the progress or position of Gen. Sherman. Those files, and the extracts from them printed on another page, are to the 29th, yet the latest news about him is contained in a brief dispatch from Memphis, Alabama, under date of Feb. 21, announcing that he had not left Meridian. Another account was received Tuesday, and placed his advance at Pearly Pear, said to be a small station on the railroad running easterly from Meridian. Whether his "advance" was a scouting party of cavalry, or really the head of a column, there is nothing to show, and we cannot accept this unsupported dispatch as evidence that Meridian had then been abandoned. For the statements from Washington and other quarters that he had occupied Selma we conceive there has been, and is, no authority at all. Putting them decisively aside, we must conclude that we know nothing of Gen. Sherman's movements later than Feb. 21, and nothing of any advance in force beyond Meridian.

But we are far from regarding this as an indication that Sherman has met with disaster, or that his plans have been thwarted. On the contrary, the silence at Richmond speaks eloquently of his success. No news is good news. If it were possible for the Rebels to send us word of any reverse to this dreaded expedition, does anybody doubt it would come post haste down the Peninsula or across the Rapidan? The wonder is that something has not been manufactured for the Northern market before this. Richmond is in telegraphic communication with the points toward which Sherman is making. The Rebel War Department undoubtedly is well informed of his position and of every engagement, serious or slight, that has been fought. Why do the Richmond papers get no news, or, getting it, why are they not permitted to print it? But at Washington, there is no sure way of knowing.

Confident, therefore, that no ill fortune has yet befallen this adventurous leader, we do nevertheless consider his chances of ultimate complete success a little reduced by the failure of Gen. Smith's cavalry force to effect a junction with him at Meridian. The losses which the cavalry suffered are severe enough, even by the Memphis account, and by the Rebel dispatch are of course made heavier. But they are unimportant, compared with the possible effect of the failure on Sherman. We say possible, because we cannot suppose the chance of failure to unite was not taken into account. There is presumably another string to the bow. But a flying column without communications needs cavalry for all purposes, and Sherman is pretty sure to find himself pinched for want of it.

Nor is there yet a word of news from Gen. Logan's corps, which is also understood to be cooperating more or less immediately with Sherman. From Chattanooga we have nothing since the recent advance—reconnaissance, or whatever it may have been—on Tunnel Hill and Dalton.

Coming up to East Tennessee, we have dispatches enough, but very little accurate information of either Schofield's or Longstreet's movements. That the Rebel commander has disappeared from the neighborhood of Knoxville is certain. Where he is gone is very uncertain. Not to rejoin Lee, we think; for it is unlikely Lee should have anticipated any early movement by Gen. Meade, strong enough in force, or earnest enough, to imperil his hold on Richmond. Longstreet went into East Tennessee with a purpose, and we do not believe he has yet abandoned it. It is conjectured he may have gone down to reinforce Johnston, imminently threatened from Chattanooga. But the direct roads from Knoxville are in our possession, and the remaining roads are so mountainous, and in all respects miserable, that an army could be moved over them only with the greatest difficulty, if at all. A descent on Kentucky through Pound Gap is also hinted at; another rumor is that Breckinridge and Buckner are the heroes selected to lead a column for the "recovery" of that State. All these reports we record; to express an opinion upon them is useless.

NEW-HAMPSHIRE. The Annual Election in the Granite State occurs next Tuesday; and there is danger that, through the large preponderance of Republican voters with the Union armies, the wrong side may carry it. It is best to state the plain truth, and urge all to govern themselves accordingly. The State is right at heart, but the absence of some Ten Thousand of her voters renders the result of this contest exceedingly doubtful. She gave Fremont in '56 35,345 votes, and Lincoln in '60 37,519; and she could now give 40,000 for the Union cause but for those of whom the war has bereft her. But her absent soldiers do not vote; so that her official aggregates for Governor last year were as follows: Gilmore, Republican, 29,035; Eastman, Dem., 23,873; Harrison, War Dem., 4,372; Eastman over Gil., 3,738; Gilmore and Harrison over Eastman, 5,300.

A careful canvass of the State has been made by our friends, with the following result: Union War Voters, 34,272; Opposition, 32,972; Doubtful, 1,352.

If we estimate our share of the doubtful as one-fourth, the probable vote for Governor next Tuesday will stand: Gilmore, 34,611; Harrison, 34,001; Gilmore's majority, 610.

This is not such an exhibit as we would wish to make; but it is such a one as all the facts known to us demand. We warn the Unionists of New-Hampshire that they are in danger of a defeat next Tuesday, and that they must bring out their very last vote to avert it. It is even possible that there will be no choice for Governor, and that the choice of a representative by the majority of a single vote in some rural township will determine whether their State shall have a Governor after the similitude of Andrew or after the pattern of Vallendigham. We do not understand that it is anywhere disputed that Harrison is as thoroughly in sympathy with the Rebellion as any man can be and live in a preponderantly loyal State. It is asserted that he was so rated at the news of the Rebel victory at Bull Run that he gave vent to his exultation (substantially) these words:

"I hope every Northern soldier will come home in a box." Even this is hardly up to his exemplar, Frank Pierce, who wrote to Jeff. Davis in 1860 that the streets of our Northern cities should run red with blood in case of a collision between the Black Republicans and 'the South.' Pierce has tried hard to provoke a Northern rebellion, especially by his Fourth-of-July harangue last year, composed when Lee's host was in Pennsylvania advancing northward, and when he doubtless presumed it would soon be entering Philadelphia on the heels of our routed, flying Army of the Potomac. In fact, there is no other Free State—not even Ohio—wherein the Democratic leaders have been so generally and so openly hostile to the War for the Union as in New-Hampshire; and their triumph next week will be a staggering blow to the Union cause. We entreat, therefore, every New-Hampshire Union voter who is at home to stay there and do his utmost, and every one who, being absent, can get home, to make all possible haste in doing so; that we may be enabled to announce next Wednesday morning that their State, though tried as by fire, is still faithful to her principles, to her country, and to Universal Freedom.

THE RIGHT OF WAY ACROSS NEW JERSEY. The surrender of the sovereign powers of the State of New-Jersey into the hands of the Camden and Amboy Railroad Company dates from 1831. The first charter was in 1830; and the statute which made the Company an independent monopoly was in 1832; but it was in 1831 that the first bribe of \$100,000 was paid by the Company and accepted by the State; and in that year, therefore, we fix the beginning of their control. The Company received the consideration for their money in 1832, in the following Legislative provision:

"That it shall not be lawful, at any time during the said railroad charter, to construct any other railroad or railroads in this State, without the consent of the said company, which shall be intended or used for the transportation of passengers or merchandise between the cities of New-York and Philadelphia, or to compete in business with the railroad authorized by the act to which this supplement is relative."

This section embraced the Camden and Amboy Railroad Company and the Delaware and Raritan Canal Company, which originally were rival corporations, but which united in 1831 for the joint plunder of the public, and have since been commonly spoken of as the Camden and Amboy simply. As that is the name under which they have grown infamous together, we use it in speaking of the two.

By the terms of the act of 1831, the State had the right to resume its independence and the franchises of the railroad, in twenty years from its completion; and of the canal in fifty years from its completion; periods of which the Companies fixed the termination in 1859 and 1852 respectively.

In 1850, a committee reported to the State Legislature that the companies—in which by their gift the State had become a stockholder—had contracted loans, payable in Europe in 1853 and 1854, some years after the expiration of the railway charter. The Camden and Amboy thereupon represented that the honor of the State was pledged to the payment of these loans—though there is nothing to explain how they could have been honestly contracted—and made a proposition for the general arrangement of all their relations with the State, by extending the railway monopoly ten years and shortening that of the canal—which was of infinitely less consequence—thirteen years, so that both monopolies should terminate, and terminate forever, in 1860. This proposition was submitted by the companies themselves; and in 1854 the Legislature adopted it in a statute, known as the act of settlement. The preamble of that act recited the exclusive privileges held by the companies, and declared that "the extinguishment of those exclusive privileges is an object of great public importance." The act itself provided that after Jan. 1, 1860, it should be lawful to construct any railroads between New-York and Philadelphia to compete with the Camden and Amboy, without the consent of that company; not lawful before. The second section extended the charters, but without any monopoly after 1859, to 1858. The assent of the companies to this act—which was of their procurement and wholly in their interest—was filed in the office of the Secretary of State.

It appears then, briefly, from this statement, that the railway monopoly in New-Jersey was created in 1832 for the benefit of the Camden and Amboy Co.; has been enjoyed by them ever since; was to expire in 1859; and in 1854 was extended till 1860. For thirty-seven years, the State has worn these iron fetters. By the consent of the Company and as the price of its continuance until that period; the servitude was to cease in 1860.

A plan is now maturing, we learn, to unsettle this arrangement and to extend the monopoly indefinitely. "For this purpose," says a pamphlet for our friends, "the roads have elected, it is said, some of their employes to office; have precipitated their influence and money upon and carried, every doubtful Senatorial and Assembly District in the State; and have elected a Legislature which their subalterns declare will register any edict that the Companies may issue."

It is feared there is danger of the success of this conspiracy, and the people of New-Jersey are summoned to interfere. We should be sorry, indeed, if there were no other power than theirs. Long subjected to the insolent rapacity and unchecked tyranny of this corporation, it may well be doubted whether they have the courage or the strength to assert their independence. Yet we believe in a superior power to that of the Camden and Amboy, even in legislation. We consider the right of Congress indisputable, and their power ample, over the whole subject; and it is the attention of that body which we now direct to this subject. Of the extortions and abuses persistently practiced by the Company, we have nothing to say. Everybody is familiar with that part of the history. We only announce, for our part, what we believe to be the dictate of equity and public interest that the exclusive privileges of the Camden and Amboy should cease, and that there should be a rival line (or rival lines) of

railway communication between New-York and Philadelphia.

WEST INDIA RUIN. There are falsehoods so gigantic and so hackneyed that they maintain a very considerable currency and credit on the strength of their very audacity. The ignorant and superficial suppose that they must have at least a substratum of truth or they could not be kept afloat—the mere fact that they have seen them afloat for a number of years, when, if they are lies, they must have been exposed, and should have been extinguished, long ago, being sufficient for them. Of this sort is the unconceivably stupendous fiction that the West Indies are going to ruin since Emancipation because the ex-slaves will not work. Over and over, has this been elaborately disproved; we are now doing our best to circulate M. Augustin Cochin's *Results of Emancipation*—a standard work, accepted as authority everywhere save by slaveholders and their tools, and for which its author was crowned by the French Academy and knighted by the Pope. The whole ground is most carefully and thoroughly traversed in this standard work, and the whole truth established beyond controversy. That freedmen have in some cases made less sugar than they did when slaves, is undoubtedly true—many wisely choosing to grow food for their families, or earn an honest livelihood in many other ways, rather than stick to sugar-making; but that there has been an immense progress—moral, intellectual, social, and industrial—in the West Indies since Emancipation, is as sure as the Multiplication Table. Yet *The Daily News* does not scruple to utter, in the interest of Jeff. Davis, the following:

"All experience proves that the African will not work unless he is made to, and he cannot be made to unless he is a slave. If really free, he won't work except for a bare subsistence."

To this stands opposed the statement of Sir Charles Grey, late Governor of Jamaica, who says:

"There are few races of men who will work harder or more perseveringly, when they are sure of getting the fruit of their labor, than the African."

There is just where the shoe pinches *The News*. It wants negroes to take their pay for their work over the head and shoulders, or across the back—against which they seem to have an innate prejudice. White men, perhaps, like to work for nothing but a cut of a whip occasionally; but "niggers" are so stupid that they don't see it. Hence the abuse heaped on them by such journals as *The News*—to which *The Commercial Advertiser* more fully replies as follows:

"The wealth accumulated by the negroes of Jamaica, during the twenty-seven years immediately following their emancipation, is £2,500,000; and three-fifths of all the cultivated land in the island is the bona fide property of the colored people, bought and paid for by their own industry."

"As a proof of the failure of emancipation, *The Daily News* contrasts the exports of 1859 and 1810 with those of 1850 and 1854. In 1859 and 1810, the British West Indies exported a monopoly of the English market, whereas in 1850 and 1854 that market was thrown open to the world by a perfect equality between British colonial products and those of foreign countries, beside which there existed no war, as in 1850 and 1810, to prevent the importations of colonial produce from foreign countries. The selection, therefore, of such comparative statistics is a gross deception. The true merits of the question will better appear by the following statistics of the British West India Islands, at the moment immediately preceding emancipation and fourteen years after emancipation. We must here call attention to the fact that the population of the islands was rapidly declining previous to emancipation."

1859-1861. 1851-1852. Population, 272,224. 475,000. Revenue, £425,560. 475,729. Sugar exported to the United Kingdom, 2,645,225. 2,427,027. Rum exported to the United Kingdom, 5,106,975. 5,611,603. Molasses, 476,000. 476,000. Shipping inward, 47,000. 64,800.

"The exports of many other articles of production had greatly increased. Cocoa-nuts showed an increase of 2,222,514 pounds; and it must not be forgotten that the free negroes consumed a much larger proportion of the results of their labor than when slaves, which should be added to the exports to form an estimate of the comparative production of free and slave labor."

LOUISIANA A FREE STATE. Election of Mr. Mahan for Governor. POINT HUDSON, Tuesday, Feb. 23, 1864. Via CAIRO, March 2.

The election yesterday resulted in the triumph of the straight Free State ticket, the Hon. Michael Mahan being elected Governor by about 3,000 majority, out of a vote of over 8,000. There is great rejoicing by the Free State party. There were illuminations and cannon firing last night.

Louisiana is a Free State.

POLITICAL. The Town Elections in February. *The Albany Journal* has returns from every county except Cattaraugus (which it presumes has gone the same as last year), and makes the following summary, showing a net Union gain of 52 towns out of 377:

Table with 4 columns: County, Union, Dem., Gains, Dem. Counties: Yates, 12, 6, 6, 6; Oneida, 12, 6, 6, 6; Hamilton, 12, 6, 6, 6; Schoharie, 12, 6, 6, 6; Chenango, 12, 6, 6, 6; Cortland, 12, 6, 6, 6; Delaware, 12, 6, 6, 6; Franklin, 12, 6, 6, 6; Fulton, 12, 6, 6, 6; Jefferson, 12, 6, 6, 6; Lewis, 12, 6, 6, 6; Monticello, 12, 6, 6, 6; Onondaga, 12, 6, 6, 6; Oswego, 12, 6, 6, 6; St. Lawrence, 12, 6, 6, 6; Schuyler, 12, 6, 6, 6; Seneca, 12, 6, 6, 6; Tioga, 12, 6, 6, 6; Warren, 12, 6, 6, 6; Yates, 12, 6, 6, 6. Total, 299, 108, 31, 3.

WAYNE COUNTY.—The Democrats have, as usual, carried Lyons, Palmyra and Arcada, but by reduced majorities. In Palmyra the Democratic Supervisor has but 34 majority; last year 120. The Union men elect Justice and Clerk.

WASHINGTON COUNTY.—Port Edward elects the Democratic Supervisor, and Easton elects the Union Supervisor by a majority of 177—a gain of 93 over last year.

MONROE COUNTY.—Union Supervisors in sixteen towns. The Democrats carry Greece, Chili and Wheatland.

CHARTER ELECTIONS. OSWEGO.—Democratic success by 160 majority; last year Democratic by 200.

UTICA.—Union Mayor has 50 majority. Last year the Democratic Mayor had 600 majority. The Union men gain two Supervisors, and elect four of the seven Aldermen.

ALBURN.—Union Mayor has 107 majority; whole Union City ticket chosen. Last year the Democratic Mayor had seven majority.

TROY.—Democratic majority about 800; last Spring, 1,100.

POUGHKEEPSIE.—Union majority on Justice, 253—a gain. Aldermen and Supervisors equally divided.

FROM WASHINGTON.

Special Dispatch to The N. Y. Tribune.

WASHINGTON, Wednesday, March 3, 1864.

THE WHISKY TAX.

The Senate to-day, by a vote of 25 to 15, refused to give any instructions as to taxing whisky on hand, but consented to another Committee of Conference. The House then withdrew its instructions, and agreed to the conference. Senators Sherman, Clark, and Hendricks, and Representatives Spaulding, Morrill, and Kasson constitute the Committee, and preserve the former equipoise of both sides of this question.

Senator Cass stated in debate to-day that there were \$40,000 worth of whisky on hand. THE CLAIM ON GREAT BRITAIN FOR INTERPUNIFICATION. A sharp diplomatic correspondence between our Government and the British is likely to ensue in consequence of Lord John Russell's withholding from Parliament Secretary Seward's demands upon Her Majesty's Government for indemnification for losses to American Commerce, caused by the Anglo Rebel Pirate Alabama.

THE AMNESTY. Very many Rebels in our prisons have applied to Secretary Stanton to be permitted to avail themselves of the offer of the Amnesty Proclamation. He will soon authorize a Commission to visit the several camps and release such as will take the oath in good faith and return to their allegiance.

ADMIRAL DALLGREN. The slighting of Admiral Dahlgren from the Baltimore train to-day would indicate that officer has been recalled from his command at Charleston.

THE PROMOTION OF GEN. GRANT. The Senate in executive session to-day, unanimously confirmed the appointment of Gen. Grant as Lieutenant-General. This recognition of merit is said to be dissatisfactory to the General-in-Chief, inasmuch as it necessitates his resignation unless his expressed intention so to do has been reconsidered.

To the Associated Press. WASHINGTON, Wednesday, March 2, 1864. EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW IN THE COURTS. The report made by Senator Sumner to-day from the Committee on Slavery and Freedmen, in the bill to secure equality before the law in the Courts of the United States, reviews the history of our Jurisprudence in respect to the exclusion of colored testimony in the Courts, and examines the laws in the several States relative to this subject. South Carolina, it appears, has never had a law excluding such testimony, yet practices exclusion.

In concluding this review, the report says, it is difficult to reach a position of compromise, without, however, the recurrence of this injustice, expressed with such particularity, in no less than fifteen States, makes injustice swell into indignation, especially when it is considered that in every State this injustice is admitted and acquiesced in by the courts. It further appears that in no State can a slave testify against a white person, excepting that in Maryland he may testify against a white person who is not a Christian. An Act under certain circumstances, in Delaware and Louisiana, can a free negro testify against a white person.

The eccentricities of judicial decisions illustrating this branch are numerous cited. Among the consequences of this position are the most degrading and cruel treatment of slaves, with impunity, and the perpetration of crime against white men, in the presence of colored persons, with the same immunity from punishment.

The report traces this proscription to the barbarous ages, and makes it the offering of Slavery, originating in ignorance and prejudice. Among the ancient Greeks, a slave's testimony was not believed upon his oath, but was admissible under torture. The Roman law, and the common law, in England, under the common law, this proscription was never recognized. The grounds for such injustice are examined at length, and the report concludes as follows:

It is for Congress to determine whether the proscription shall continue to be maintained in the Courts of the United States, or, in other words, if a local rule, barbarous, irrational, and unjust, shall be allowed to exist any longer with the national sanction.

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