VERY LATE REBEL NEWS.

Continued from First Page.

tinguish them; his reasons going to show that in England the Ministry are the Executive, and the King a mere puppet, while here, the President is really the Executive, and his Cabinet virtually but his clerks.

It matters very little whether these positions of the President be true or not in the abstract. Nobody is willing now to dispute about fanciful analogies and abstract theories. The object of Congress was to put somebody into confidential relations with the President, who should possess the confidence and know the feelings of the country. Congress may not have a great deal of that popular confidence itself. Its interference with the President's Cabinet might on general principles, be open to criticism. But after all, how was it practicable for the universal yearning of the people for a change of men and measures to be brought home to the Executive except by the method adopted by the members. If such a method is not positively constitutional, it is at least sanctioned by the public emergency. In great exigencies of state, where the organic law fails to supply a remedy suitable to the case, it is necessary to improvise one for the occasion, and the measure thus originating and thus sanctioned, usually ranks thereafter as common law of the land.

The case with our Executive was one which presented a strong appeal for some sort of interference or reform. The soldiers of the Confederacy were sufficiently numerous and valiant to defy any and all efforts at subjugation. The material resources of the country were abundant to supply the people and army indefinitely. Yet the one had been scattered and the other squandered, until the armies in the field were insufficient to breast the invasion, and their supplies growing more and more limited every day. Generals incompetent to command, and not possessing the confidence of the people or their armies, were perversely continued in command, in spite of continued remonstrance and habitual disasters; and other generals enjoying the confidence of both the army and the people were removed from the field on the most capricious pretenses. Finally, the burning disgrace was suffered of a great seaboard city being captured without a shot of a gun, by an army marching overland from a base four hundred miles in the interior—a disgrace under which no British Ministry could have retained the Government twenty-four hours—a disgrace for which a Turkish Vizier would have lost his head in half an hour, if not a Turkish Sultan his throne.

The canker worm which was gnawing into the vitals of the Confederacy and paralyzing all its energies, was a painful and total want of confidence in the administration at Richmond. There was no distrust of the intrinsic energies and resources of the Confederacy. Assure the country that its contributions of men and supplies would be wisely turned to avail, and no other appeal was needed. Everything needful for the public defense and for the successful prosecution of the war could be commanded, provided only confidence could be restored. The people from every quarter wrote these things to Congress. Members, in their intercourse with the people and army, know them already. They were here in Richmond to represent their constituents, and endeavor to carry into effect their wishes in everything wherein the public interests could be promoted. Nothing could have been more natural or more consistent with the spirit of our institutions, than the means which members took to make known the wishes of the country to the Executive.

If the compromising condition of public affairs was due, not to any inherent defect in the cause, but to faults in those who conducted it, then a judicious change of men would not only revive the confidence of the country, but, independently of the powerful assistance thus obtained, restore the fortunes of the Confederacy. These were the views of members in recommending to the President a change of the men who were not merely his advisers, but who conducted great Departments of the Government, on the success of which the country's existence depended. A recommendation made in such a spirit, from such promptings, under such grave circumstances, and for such high purposes, deserved a better response than it has received from Mr. Davis. The question now is the safety of the country, and not the teeby dignity of this or that public functionary, or the courtesies due between coordinate departments of government.

A debate upon constitutional checks and balances is felt to be untimely. But the question of Executive responsibility to the country has forced itself all unbidden upon the public mind. Nobody wanted to raise it; everybody was anxious to avoid all questions of the sort. And yet it thrusts itself forward in an appalling shape. The country is going to ruin under gross and palpable mal-administration. Reform, instant and thorough, is vitally essential; and the Executive that has caused this urgent need rises up, refuses to institute reform itself, and denies the power anywhere to enforce it. The Confederate President is elected for six years, and is forever ineligible afterwards, so that the people can never reach him. Impeachment never reached any erring functionary—so that he is absolutely without any responsibility at all. By abolishing the four years term and ineligibility the Confederacy lost control of its Chief Executive. He being out of reach, there was but one hope left of inforcing this responsibility. The acting heads of the great departments ought to be gentlemen of sensitive honor, too proud to hold their stations against the wishes of their country. The experiment was tried of requiring them to decide whether they were mere clerks of the President, or servants of the public responsible to its plainly declared wishes. There was one Virginian in the cabinet who knew that he would be disgraced in public opinion here if he continued to hold his position. Whether his example will be followed is only another form of the question whether public confidence will be revived in the cause, and whether the Confederacy shall continue to exist.

Dissensions in the Rebel Congress.

From The Richmond Enquirer of Feb 9.

The correspondence between President Davis and the Hon. James A. Seddon presents an argument upon the powers and duties of the Legislative and Executive Departments of the Government peculiarly important at this time. While our President presents most forcibly the argument that our theory of Government, unlike that of Great Britain, confers no power on the Congress to compel Executive compliance with its wishes, and demonstrates the complete independence of the President, yet in a Government founded on the popular will, and sustained by public opinion, an obdurate non-compliance with the will and wishes of the popular branch of the Government must be accompanied with much embarrassment. While the Congress have no constitutional right to put in or turn out a Cabinet Minister, yet the organization of the Executive Department being entirely within the power of Congress, it may, by repealing the laws which established those Departments, leave the Executive stripped of all capacity to execute the laws, or force him to comply with the will of the people as expressed by Congress. That any such action on the part of Congress would be factious and improper we do not hesitate to declare, but that it is nevertheless within the power of Congress cannot be denied, and that it may be within their intention is not improbable.

Public opinion is the life and soul of popular government; its channels of expression are the Press and the voice of the representatives of the people. It will not do to qualify public opinion by the term "enlightened," for all well-defined and explicitly expressed public sentiment must be accepted as enlightened. If only an "enlightened public opinion" is to be respected, and the authorities are to be the judges whether or not it is "enlightened," the question of obedience to public sentiment is narrowed down to the will of the authorities. When they choose to obey, the opinion is "enlightened;" when they desire to disregard, it is not "enlightened." And, applying this to the question of reorganizing the Cabinet, no man who has watched the course of public opinion can deny that the present Cabinet no longer retains the confidence of the country. At one time the Press and Congress were each divided upon the Cabinet. The first Congress, which made every excuse that was possible, could not stem the current of popular sentiment which was setting against the Cabinet. The present Congress, now fresh from the people, comes out more strongly than the old for new men. The Press, once divided, is now almost unanimous for a change of Cabinet. Unless the Press is venal and corrupt, and the Congress factious and unpatriotic, the expression of public sentiment now, with unexampled unanimity, demands of the President a change of Cabinet.

We do not mean to imply that any want of confidence exists toward the President, but his fellow-citizens believe that his own usefulness is impaired by the voice and advice of men not equal to the occasion. Whether other men could have done any better or given any greater satisfaction, we cannot say; but that the present Cabinet has wholly failed to secure the confidence of the country none can deny. Mr. Memminger recognized the fact and retired. Mr. Seddon now retires because the Virginia Delegation has expressed the opinion of the people of Virginia, as they understand it, against the Cabinet.

Certainly, the Navy Department has not given satisfaction. Whether it could have done better we do not mean to intimate; indeed, we are of the opinion that Mr. Mallory has done about as well as could have been expected. He has no navy—because he had no navy yards, no ships, no men, and because foreign Governments would not permit him to buy. He has lost nearly all his gunboats—because they could not be built, with the diminished resources of this country, of strength sufficient to encounter the vessels of the enemy. But, notwithstanding all these difficulties, there does exist a strong desire on the part of the people for a change in the Navy Department.

The State Department has not secured its recognition, but that was more its misfortune than its fault. Mr. Benjamin has not left untried any expedient that would have influenced foreign governments to give us justice and right. But he could not make them act; hence he has failed, and any other statesman would probably have succeeded no better. One great cause of Mr. Benjamin's unpopularity has been the fact that in no proclamation signed by him, as Secretary of State, has ever the existence of a triune God been admitted. He has confined his State papers to Deistical belief and stamped upon the religious faith of the country a practical denial of the Trinitarian Jehovah. This was his faith, but not the faith of the wide-spread religious sentiment that prevails throughout this country. The people do not like to be made to choose between Jesus Christ and Judah P. Benjamin, and to take the latter in preference. Twice the Congress has endeavored to change this, and has adopted resolutions designed to preclude the exclusion of our Savior from the prayers of a people asking the interposition of God in their behalf, but each time the express resolution has been disregarded. This matter of religious faith is no insignificant affair. It is the deepest sentiment in the souls of this people, it is the distinguishing trait in the character of this revolution, it has its influence in the camp and at the hearthstone, in temple and legislative hall, and has its recognition in the confessions of thousands and thousands in our army. When disregarded, it has shocked the whole fabric of religious faith. Appealing to God and not recognizing the divinity of his Son, is mocking Jehovah with the vain repetition of words which have no meaning. The country asks no hypocrisy from Mr. Benjamin; his religious belief is respected, but they desire some other statesman whose faith more accords with the religious convictions of the people.

We present the public sentiment of the country as it appears to us, protesting no wish to be unfriendly or unkind either to the President or the Secretaries. Were we to misrepresent the sentiment of our countrymen and deceive the Executive into the belief that there was no complaint against his Secretaries, or withhold the honest expression of public opinion as it presents itself to us, we should neither be a friend of the President nor a lover of the country. Truth and candor are at all times proper, and should be at all times acceptable to the President. If he would retain the confidence and love of the people, unite and strengthen the bonds of attachment between himself and his countrymen, reanimate the public heart, and give hope and the assurance of success to the people, he will calmly consider the facts as presented, and speedily give them recognition in the reformation of his cabinet.

Lessons from Other Days.

From The Sentinel, Feb. 9.

"They are driven to the wall—treat them as criminals craving mercy." This was the course counsel of a New York journal to Abraham Lincoln, as he set out to meet our Commissioners. We all know how well he acted his part, in accordance with the admonition. Who expected to find this imbued with a better spirit than had thus hissed its paltry venom, by way of advice? Can any one have contemplated a single phase of the gross presumption which governs the motives, as it guides the movements of our foes, without being persuaded that they are a people radically different from ourselves? He and his *false Aristides* came with a blustering "woe to" as their commentary on the sum of those who represented "Peace on earth—good will to men." It was a Frankenstein meeting a Good Samaritan; it was the *rust colour* of a Maranatha, to answer the *Pax vobiscum* of a Paul—a *tax victa* to blur a *Te Deum*; a Bombastes Furioso, face to face with Humanity. And, in all this, it was thoroughly characteristic and thoroughly representative.

"They are driven to the wall—treat them as criminals craving mercy." Heckering, insolent words, worthy of their source! Worthy of the doom that awaits them, as, in all times, it has awaited, and taken herself on similar bravado. It was so in effect, that *The London Morning* (long since defunct) spoke to George III, a few months before he had to treat his "rebel criminals" as honored equals. It was precisely so that his Imperial Majesty spoke to the tyrant Gesler, in the January of 1308; and yet, Switzerland has survived the threat to this hour; a threat far less audacious to the mighty voice of Germany under the circumstances of the Confederate Swiss, than it is in the Gascon of the day to us. It was almost exactly so Francis of Carrara wrote to the Genoese, to crush, forever, the "wicked republicans of Venice"—"shattered, hopeless, and at our mercy."

There is something significantly applicable to current events in this coincidence, and for that reason it is worth recounting. Our foes have utterly ignored the many noble lessons of home history, and have wilfully closed their eyes to even the most glowing pages in what were once our common records. As this, that we have here to offer, is of purely foreign extraction, it would, doubtless, affect them more than any parallels of history which are merely of native growth. Not for any possible effect on them, however, but for what it teaches ourselves, we are led to present one of the most suggestive answers of history to such braggart advice as cheered Lincoln on his way to City Point.

Toward the end of the year 1379, the Venetians had been reduced to such extremities that not a solitary ray of hope lightened the dense gloom then hanging over their destiny. The battle of Pola so shattered their armies, and fell of Chioza so crippled their power, that despairing its unnerving grip on the whole Republic. The united armaments of Genoa and Padua had enacted all this distress by a succession of brilliant victories in an aggressive war. On the 16th of August, 1379, Francis da Carrara wrote to his capital that the gallant Venetians, "were pushed to the wall, and must be treated without mercy."

There were croakers in those days, as there have been ever since, and these croakers were suddenly so numerous throughout the Venetian Republic as to include nearly half of its civilians. Less on behalf of humanity than of their remaining interests, these caused an embassy to visit the triumphant enemy not to sue for peace "on honorable terms," *but on any terms*. A panic was on them, and in its paroxysm they gave their ambassadors a blank sheet of paper, let the leaders of the united armaments fill it up as they pleased; only allow them a shadow of the substance, they were too ready to surrender—and that was all. But that shadow required the recognition of the nominal independence of Venice. This was a slight boon, but it could not be tolerated.

The arrogant Genoese were fully flushed with victory and panting to complete the ruin of their rival. "My foot is on their necks," wrote Peter Doria to Genoa; "they are suing for mercy in the guise of peace; but I am deaf." Nothing seemed easier than to push on and crush them. Sanglicants in his camp with a "blank paper," were proof positive not only of the humiliation, but of the destruction a few days or weeks would finish forever. Therefore he replied to the ambassadors in these words: "On God's faith, gentlemen of Venice, *you shall have no peace* until we first put a rein upon those unbridled horses of yours that are on the porch of your Evangelist St. Mark. Your *subjugation is certainty*, we shall keep you quiet. Take back the prisoners you would give me up. I shall presently come and let them and all the others out."

Do not imagine that we are here describing, slightly disguised, the speech which was heard the other day at Fortress Monroe. The words and policy of the short-sighted tyrant of five centuries ago, might, indeed, be confounded with their modern reproduction. But we are speaking of the veritable Peter Doria, commander of the Genoese, and not of Abraham Lincoln; of the spirit with which they said, and the manner of saying, ages ago, away in Italy: "They are driven to the wall—treat them as criminals craving mercy." These words were then precisely what they are now, insolently bravado. The Venetian Commissioners carried them back for the consideration of their despairing comrades. They repeated to them the bold, merciless words. It was a mighty election shock! The dark gloom was at once illuminated by a flash of patriotic lightning, and there was not one Venetian craven enough to hug the temper he was lately so eager to embrace; dismay and distrust as if by magic fell from their hearts, and instantly they girded themselves for the strife. They would nobly do and bravely die for Venetia and independence. It was well that their preparations kept pace with their rekindled valor. The united armaments were quickly upon them to achieve the victories that were to make good their haughty and inexorable threats.

Many terrible and uncertain conflicts succeeded; but there was no more dismay in the Venetian ranks or people. All was bright, deep-set, harmonious determination. It triumphed—they *would not be conquered*, and they *were not*. Within five months of his fearful threat Peter Doria paid with his life a retributive penalty for his insolence, before the walls of Chioza. In five months more the all-but-vanquished Venetians dictated their own terms to their prematurely exultant foes.

It was the despotic and heartless answer of the Doria which saved Venice, not only from her relentless enemies, but what was unworthy of her within herself. That was the spark that lit her expiring hope and revived her whole being. Resolute in her resistance, she stepped forth self-reliant, and only drew back victorious. The peace which her foes scornfully denied her, she compelled them humbly to sue for on such terms as she pleased to allow. Behold! history is reenacting one of her sublimest spectacles, this very day on this very soil.

Gen. Butler's Revelations.

From The Richmond Whig, (Feb. 9.)

"When rogues fall out, honest men get their dues." It does not by any means follow, however, that by means of Yankee quarrels, the Confederacy will recover all that is owing her. No conceivable capital of money or of fortune could repay to the South all that she has lost by Yankee brutality, malignity, and vindictiveness, or compensation for the suffering she has been forced to endure, or satisfy her demands for justice. Our dues are not to be got in any such way. But from the disputes of liars truth very often derives much benefit. Witness the very pretty quarrel between Butler and Grant. When Yankees praise each other, nobody believes a word they say, but when they abuse each other, there is no abstract reason to believe them, except that which is involved in their natural tendency to mendacity. But, on the general principle that anything bad is at least applicable to them, what would, as to other people, be a slander, as to the Yankees, if not true, certainly ought to be true. Nothing that is vile, nothing that is dishonorable, nothing that is vicious, nothing that is mendacious, nothing that is cruel, nothing that is brutal, can excel what the Yankees have displayed of these qualities. Other people have been false, others have been cruel, others have been brutal but it was reserved for the Yankees to exhibit the full and perfect combination of all those qualities in a national character which seems to have been created only to deserve the execration of mankind.

But for this fact, which seems to be now universally acknowledged, it would have been hard to credit the statements which Butler made in a recent speech at Lowell. Butler has quarrelled with Grant, or rather Grant came to the conclusion that Butler was rather an incumbrance in his army, than an acquisition, and hence availed himself of the first opportunity to get rid of him. Butler is determined, however, that the Lieutenant-General shall not continue to enjoy the reputation which no one knows better than he to have been founded on the most monstrous system of charlatanry and humbug that ever Yankee ingenuity and impudence has ever devised. Hence while magnifying his own suppositious exploits during the campaign of last Summer, and claiming to have won the only successes achieved by the Yankee armies in the operations against Richmond, he declares the whole campaign, on Grant's part, to have been a stupendous failure, characterized by a series of disastrous defeats, in which tens of thousands of Union soldiers were wantonly slaughtered for the accomplishment of an unattainable purpose. We are now for the first time informed of this fact on Yankee authority, although during the whole period Grant and Stanton had been claiming daily victories, which ought, according to all reasonable theories, to have conducted the Federal armies right into the Capitol-square before the coming of the Summer-solstice. We are now likewise told for the first time what was Grant's true plan, and we are shown how thoroughly he was defeated, outgeneraled and circumvented.

Butler reveals the fact that it was Grant's design to strike James river above Richmond, and then effect a junction with the Army of the James operating from Bermuda Hundred. A consummation of this movement would have completely isolated Richmond, and cut it off from its necessary communications. Butler tells us now Grant was baffled in these calculations by Gen. Lee; but he does not tell us how he himself was beaten and driven back by Gen. Beauregard. He does, however, claim that his assistance "saved the battle of Cold Harbor,"—a battle in which Grant attacked the Confederate lines with his whole force, and was driven back with the loss of nearly 10,000 men, the Confederates losing not more than 1,000—after which he abandoned his whole system of operations on the north side. This is what Butler calls "saving a battle."

But what would be, were it not for our knowledge of the Yankee character, one of the most revolting disclosures of brutality and duplicity on record, is the shameless confession in regard to the exchange of prisoners. Butler takes care to cast the odium of this transaction on General Grant. It appears that Grant gave orders to stop the exchange after Butler had made arrangements to perfect it. That Butler then wrote an argument, not for the purpose of supporting a position deemed to be just in itself, but to make a case by which the violation of the cartel might be justified to the world. In other words, as *The New-York World* says, the reasons given were not the true reasons, but were sham reasons, and thus the scores of thousands of unfortunate captives on both sides were made to suffer, not to maintain a principle, but in order to prevent the Confederacy getting the services of any more men, and thus to enable Grant to conceal, in some measure, his extraordinary blunders and stupendous losses.

Firing the Southern Heart.

From The Richmond Whig, Feb. 9.

The fire of resistance is rekindled in the breasts of the Confederate people, but burns most brightly in the ranks of that veteran and patriotic army which has never ceased it to decline. Nothing can be more encouraging than the indignant responses of these war worn veterans to the insulting proposals of the Lincoln Government, except, perhaps, the valor with which they always repel the insults of the enemy. In every corps, division, brigade and regiment meetings are now being held and resolutions are passed expressive of the determination of the army never to abandon the holy struggle in which they have been engaged until independence shall crown our efforts. A spectacle like this is enough to augment the courage of the most determined, to confirm the confidence of the most sanguine, and to restore hope to the most despondent.

It is well that proper responses should be made to these expressions of resolution on the part of the army. While the brave men who daily risk their lives for the country, who suffer privation cheerfully, and joyfully encounter the perils of the battle-field are declaring themselves ready to make every sacrifice, even to the last, in order to maintain the struggle, it would be shameful were their voices to find no echo among those whom they have left at home—the fathers, the mothers and sisters, for whose rights and liberties they have dedicated their lives. This city will speak with an echoing response to-day. Her example should be followed throughout the State. Let county meetings be held responding to the army, and pledging the fortunes and the utmost exertions of the people at home for the support of the war. Nothing will have a better effect in the army than for our gallant soldiers to know that their efforts and their sacrifices meet the sympathy and the appreciation of the country.

War News.

THE SOUTH-SIDE-OFFICIAL FROM GEN. LEE.

Gen. Lee reported to the War Department, yesterday afternoon, that the enemy made no advance from their position on Hatcher's Run Tuesday. Their skirmishers, however, were pushed forward against some portions of our line, but made no attack.

The Express of yesterday, has an interesting account of the affair of Monday, in which it says the Yankees have four corps in this movement, the First, Second, Fifth and Sixth,—nearly the entire strength of Grant's army. It is a formidable flank movement for the extension of his lines in the great plan of investing Petersburg.

GEN. GARDNER REMOVED.

The Marion Clarion says that Major-General Gardner has been relieved from duty in this district, and Major-General Will. T. Martin appointed in his stead.

GENERAL WINDER DEAD.

We regret to learn that Brigadier-General John H. Winder, who for a considerable time, it will be remembered, commanded the department of Henrico, died at Florence, S. C., on the 6th.

MOSBY'S MEN.

In yesterday's issue we copied from a Yankee paper an account of the capture of a number of Col. Mosby's men. Yesterday Col Mosby called in person and informed us that he had learned by telegraph, through an officer of his command, that there was no truth in it. We thought it passing strange that any body of men in the Yankee army, wearing boots or breeches, could capture over a hundred of Mosby's men.

WHAT GENERAL FORREST WANTS.

Gen. Forrest favors arming 200,000 negroes. He declares if he ever had any inclination to fight for revenge, that time and feeling have passed. He now only contends for principle, for home, wife and children, to prevent subjugation, but desires peace, and is tired of scenes of blood. Ross's brigade of his Corps is yet at Corinth. Bell's brigade is in West Tennessee, recruiting.

FROM SOUTH CAROLINA.

It was stated in a a telegram received a few days since that heavy skirmishing had been going on at "Matthews's Bridge." This bridge is 12 miles from Graham's Turn Out, which is 17 miles west of Branchville, on the Augusta Railroad.

FROM NORTH MISSISSIPPI.

The Canton (Miss.) Citizen has heard it estimated by a gentleman of intelligence that it is altogether probable that no further efforts will be made to hold the country between the Yazoo and Big Sandy rivers, or to protect the Mississippi Central railroad; but our lines will be moved back at least as far as Grenada, and perhaps farther east, the only hope now being to hold the Mobile and Ohio Railroad.

FROM NORTHERN ALABAMA.

A gang of tories and deserters made a descent on Jasper, Walker County, Alabama, just after sunset on the 10th. The Confederate forces, 35 in number, fled. The court-house, jail, and several other buildings were burned. The books of the Government assessor and tax collector were destroyed, but no money was lost. The records and papers of the counties, officers and courts were also burned.

FROM WILMINGTON.

The Journal says that two Yankee gunboats shelled Fort Anderson on Friday last. No damage was done to the Fort. Six of our men wounded, two of them seriously. There were two monitors in the river, but neither came near enough to participate. The fort replied, and put a shot through one of the gunboats, compelling her to haul off.

THE NORTH CAROLINA COMMISSIONERS.

The Raleigh Confederate says that the Commissioners from North Carolina, who recently visited Richmond, "were admitted to an immediate and protracted interview with President Davis." The matters of conference were confidential, but we are enabled to say that the President was frank, unreserved and confiding, that he presented to the Commissioners a full history of his policy as connected with peace negotiations, and that the interview resulted agreeably and usefully.

QUARTERMASTERS.

The Goldsborough Journal of the 4th says, in speaking of quartermasters, we do not pretend to say that they are *all* as active as they might be or ought to be. It would be idle to say that they are all saints or patterns of prudence or virtue. Nor do we for one moment suppose there are no dishonest or dishonorable men among them. That would be running to the other extreme. All men are neither saints nor devils, and in every large collection of men the bad and good must necessarily come single. But we do say, and desire to be understood, that as classes they are entitled to the fair and charitable belief that they are as good as other classes for the same numbers.

The Question of Arming the Negroes.

From The Richmond Dispatch, Feb. 8.

The following letter from the Army of Northern Virginia asks us to "propose to the Virginia Legislature to raise two or three regiments of picked negro troops and offer them to Gen. Lee. He will be glad to have them and it will settle the thing. There are many first rate officers—native and foreign—who will take the command, and when the thing is tried we can tell better how it will succeed. Men by ages of talking with nothing but assertions on each side."

"A small experiment with 20,000 negroes will help us more than all the acts of Congress combined, and, my word for it, if the thing be properly done, we will never hear no more about the negro being unfit for a soldier. Begin it—begin it now.

"They talk about diminishing food supply. I should like to know what good the largest crops will do us, if we cannot defend the railroads that give access to them. Let the crops be reduced a little, but let us be able to get at them anyhow. Judge Gholson says it would not add to our strength, as there are only 30,000 arms bearing men among them. That is good. It will bring out 100,000, it will make the work of reconquering in the North still more difficult, and will accomplish our success. Our people are deluded about peace. The army will not be sold out by the cowards at home. They must consent. We are not negroes to be sold for a price. We value our dead comrades at a very high figure. Nothing but liberty will satisfy us for their loss, and that price we are determined to get in spite of the timid and the traitorous. Congress has made us feel ashamed. It has belittled the country for which we are fighting. Is it possible that what we call the Confederacy, that for which so many of our gallant brothers have died and for which so many are enduring a protracted imprisonment, is nothing but a vile party afterall? Find it nothing but censure for the insult put upon it by the wretched renegade Foote? Can it be that Congress expressed the feeling of the people in its action on that slave? We want to know whether this is a mere quarrel of parties that can be adjusted by a political caucus, or whether it is a struggle of a nation for existence. If it be the former, it is not worth the life of any man that has perished in the war. If it be the latter, it makes the names of those who have fallen glorious, and the resolution of their surviving comrades unconquerable. Let these peace men speak plainly. We will suffer and die, if need be, for what we believe to be our cause. We wouldn't lose a dime for the cause as they appear to undervalue it. Let Congress speak out boldly and worthily of our cause; for, and, as I firmly believe, of the great mass of our people, who have been misled and discouraged by a few dastard and bloated speculators. We want to hear the genuine ring of the true metal once more, to assure us that we stand between a great country and its ruin, and not between a mean party and its defeat. Let us see that the cause is more precious than the negroes or their wealth—that everything will be given to support it—and we will fight with the assurance, that if we fail, it will be in discharge of the loftiest social duty, and that the end arrived at is worthy of the sacrifices we have made and may yet make to attain it. I repeat it, show the army and the people that the Confederacy is a nation with national dignity and national rights, not a vile party, with its wretched trickery and mean timidity.

"I get mad when I think of what is being said and done on the subject of adjustment, by men who mean nothing but peace on any terms that will secure their miserable lives, their dishonorable safety and ease, and perpetuate an institution about which they are infinitely more fanatical than all the Smiths, Garrisons, Stowes and Beechers. So you must excuse my warmth, but don't spare the delinquents. Bring them to the point and then to Castle Thunder and the gibbet, if they do any act that decries the independence of those States and of this Confederacy. Let them choose under which flag. They will be of little value to any, and least of all to a people who have resolved to maintain their independence or perish. They must fight on either side, and they who won't fight or help pay, who do, must stand aside. Their destiny will be settled for them by stouter hearts and stronger hands."

Such is the voice of the army. Give the army hope—aid in numbers and encouragement in spirit. In the matter of arming the negroes, we hope that the result of the late Hampton Roads interview has fully advised all persons that what shall remain of Slavery belongs to the people of these States to determine. Reconstruction cannot save the remnant; reunion could only be made without any vestige of it. There is, therefore, no earthly hope for Slavery but in the success of our arms. Shall it be made use of to protect itself and us, or shall it be permitted to die, an immense resource, unused and useless? Many object to making soldiers of negroes because they have no confidence in their fidelity, while others believe that their withdrawal from producing will be a positive loss, without any compensating strength to the army. The experiment suggested by our correspondent would test the fidelity of the negro without affecting production. And as this matter can only be determined and settled by experiment, we hope the Virginia Legislature will determine immediately to gratify Gen. Lee and test the experiment. It is the shortest and safest way of settling the question.

That nothing shall stand between the people of these States and independence will soon be made known when the popular responses come ringing back from the country to Lincoln's propositions. A new spirit will be aroused, a determination to sacrifice everything and make all serve the cause and contribute to its success. If that spirit of firmness and resolution be met with any fanatical attachment to negro Slavery, seeking to keep it from contributing its just proportion to the general cause, negro Slavery will be brushed from the pathway of a brave people, without one thought or care for its owners. It would be better to meet this spirit of determined liberty with some proposition of a experiment, than by obdurate silence or refusal to excite a feeling of antagonistic anger which shall manumit and conscript all the negroes. A spirit of compromise is now proper, and it will be peculiarly fit in the Virginia Legislature to give this experiment a trial. One brigade of five regiments, of 5,000 picked negroes, to be officered, drilled, and fought as Gen. Lee shall direct.

The Arming of Slaves in Congress.

On Tuesday the Senate went into secret session to take into consideration the resolution of Mr. Brown, of Mississippi, that the Committee on Military Affairs be instructed to report a bill, with the least practicable delay, to take into the military service of the Confederate States a number of negro soldiers, not to exceed two hundred thousand, by voluntary enlistment, with the consent of their owners, or by conscription, as may be found necessary; and that the Committee provide in said bill for the emancipation of said negroes in all cases where they prove loyal and true to the end of the war, and for the immediate payment, under proper restrictions, of their full present value to their owners.

Mr. Burnett of Kentucky moved to so modify the resolution as to make it a resolution of inquiry and not of positive instruction. The amendment was rejected.

A vote was then, after debate, taken on the resolution, and it was rejected—yeas 3, nays 13.

Those who voted in the affirmative were Messrs. Brown, Henry and Vest.

Those who voted in the negative were Messrs. Baker, Caperton, Graham, Haynes, Hunter, Johnson of Missouri, Maxwell, Oldham, Orr, Semmes, Walker, Watson and Wigfall.

This lays the uneasy ghost for the present at least.

In the House, on Wednesday, the Speaker laid before the House the bill returned from the Senate providing for the employment of free negroes and slaves in certain menial capacities in the army. This bill was passed by the House last week, but having been amended by the Senate is returned to the House for its concurrence.

Mr. Goode, of Virginia, moved that the rules be suspended and the bill be considered, which was agreed to.

The bill being taken up, the House refused to agree to the Senate's amendments, and asked for a committee of conference.

[This is the principal bill on the subject of arming slaves; the one killed in the Senate was a side affair.]

The Rebel General Lee on the Situation.

From The Richmond Dispatch, Feb. 9.

A Richmond correspondent of a southern paper says:—

General Lee told Mr. W. C. Rives the other day, that there was but a single thing to fear, and that was the spreading of a careless despondency among the people. Prevent that and all would be well. We had strength enough left to win our independence, and we were certain to win it if the people will only not give way to a foolish despair. To another distinguished gentleman General Lee said that the abuse of the press on the President pained him there very much. He had confidence in the President, and did not think we could find a better man for that place.

We have also heard from another source, which we consider entitled to credit, that Gen. Lee said he was "surprised at the despondency of the citizens." When Gen. Lee speaks thus, when Gen. Lee says, "we have strength enough left to win our independence, and we are certain to win it if the people will not only give way to a foolish despair," the people ought to believe him. This is not the irresponsible utterance of an excited politician, and still less of a street-corner cynic; it is the voice of the highest military authority in the Confederacy; of a man better informed than any other of the resources of the enemy and of our own; it is spoken in the freedom of social intercourse, and not for public effect, and it comes from a man who never exaggerates, and who would not stain his honor by deception for all the renown the world could give. Do the people believe Robert E. Lee? And if they do, will they not dismiss at once that "foolish despair" which, he assures them, is the only obstacle to their independence?

The people of the confederacy know at best what the loss of their independence means. They have that knowledge from the Federal Congress, and from the lips of Lincoln and Seward. There is no earthly hope for them but in stern and unanimous resistance; and in that there is everything to hope. So Gen. Lee declares, and that trumpet gives no uncertain sound.

Abandonment of the Rebel Bureau of Conscription.

We learn that a movement is on foot in Congress to abolish the Bureau of Conscription, and to substitute a new plan for the execution of the conscription by men detailed from the different commands of the army. The plan is said to be approved by Gen. Lee.—[Richmond Examiner, Feb. 9.

Gold Threatened with a Rapid Decline.

There is every reason to believe that gold must soon take a rapid decline. It is understood that a bill is being prepared in Congress to pay the soldiers limited amounts in gold, and that the Legislature of Virginia is also considering a penal measure to prohibit trade in coin. Apart from those measures the scarcity of money is becoming extreme, and it will be utterly impossible for the brokers to carry up gold against the contraction going on in the currency. *A small sterling bill was sold yesterday at auction for fifty-one.* The country has great confidence in Mr. Trenholm's financial judgment; and it is to be hoped that Congress will in no way interfere with his present firm and judicious policy to appreciate the currency, and to bring order out of chaos, in which his predecessor left the financial affairs of the Government. [Richmond Examiner, Feb. 9.

Extra Session of the Mississippi Legislature.

Gov. Clark has issued a proclamation convening the Mississippi Legislature in extra session. It is to assemble in Macon on the 20th of February.

[Richmond Sentinel, Feb. 8.

Scarcity in the Cattle Market—Trains all Delayed by Snow.

We expect the greatest scarcity of cattle to-day that we have had in many years. All the trains have been delayed by great snow storms on the New-York Central and other railroads. Cattle that were at Buffalo, intended for last week's market, are not yet here. At Albany on Friday morning, not a car load had arrived, but a passenger train of 14 cars came in, 24 hours behind time, which had been moved some miles this side of Syracuse by seven engines forward and one behind. In this state of the roads, freight trains could not be moved. A cattle train which left Buffalo on Tuesday, succeeded in reaching Syracuse on Wednesday, and unloaded. Saturday we learned from the Superintendent of the Harlem Railroad that the telegraph informed him that 12 or 14 car loads would come down on Saturday, but he had no assurance of any more in time for Monday's market. From the Erie Railroad we have the following report from the Superintendent: "No cattle trains have arrived, and we have no certain information that any will arrive. The truth is, we have so much other freight that we are almost compelled to abandon the attempt to get cattle forward." By the New Jersey Central and the Camden, no cattle are expected.

There will be, moreover, but a small stock of local cattle, and speculators will endeavor to frighten butchers into the idea that the great time predicted of a famine in the supply has arrived, and that they must pay famine prices. We assure them there is no cause for alarm. There is a good supply of cattle on the roads, and if not here Monday, they will be in the course of the week. We commend the exercise of patience, and not the payment of famine prices.

Theaters, Etc.

The pleasantest theatrical incident of the week—the weather not interfering so rudely as in Mr. Gilbert's case, last Tuesday—will be the benefit of Miss Gannon, at Wallack's Theater, which is announced to take place to-morrow evening. Mr. John Brougham's comedy, "The Game of Life," which has not been represented within six years, will be revived for the occasion. It is almost superfluous to say that Miss Gannon's artistic claim upon public consideration is unequaled by any other member of her profession in this community. There are many who deserve well, but she now takes rank above them all. Her natural and rare vivacity, her exuberant humor, and the hearty genuineness of her whole style seem to have at last lifted her to a position in some respects superior to criticism, and have certainly made it impossible to judge of her by any standard excepting that which she has herself created. Miss Gannon's best personations are more nearly akin to artistic perfection than those of any other actress who to-day speaks the English language. Her popularity is not less than her merit, and her benefit—the weather restraining itself with due decorum—will be one of the agreeable and successful events of the season. The other evenings of this week will be occupied at Wallack's with standard comedies. "Secrets Worth Knowing" will be repeated to-night, and on Thursday "The Heir at Law" will be represented for the first time this season.

At Niblo's Garden, Mrs. F. W. Lander enters to-night upon the second week of her engagement. "Adrienne the Actress" will be produced—a play in which the lady has won some of her worthiest successes. The Comte de Saxe will be represented by Mr. Pope. "The Lady of Lyons" and "Love" are announced as in preparation.

Mr. Owens contemplated changing his bill this week, at the Broadway Theater, but the popular demand for more Pry and more Indian has awed him from the career of his humor. Six additional nights of these jocund personations are therefore promised. On Monday next they will positively be withdrawn, and "Toodles" and "Forty Winks" be substituted.

The Olympic and the Winter Garden pursue the even etc., etc. Let their scenic artists nevermore paint Fortune with Fisellen's wheel, "to signify that she is turning, and inconstant, and variations, and mutabilities." At these establishments she has taken a fixed attitude, and refuses to move on. Her foot, instead of holding a precarious tenure upon "the rolling restless stone," has planted itself firmly in a more eligible locality, and struck permanent oil. No limit is yet determined upon for the productive careers of "Hamlet" and "The Streets of New-York."

"Fresh expectation troubles not the heart
With any long'd for change, or better state."

The French Theater reopened brilliantly on Saturday last, and with the best promise of prosperity for the new season. Jules Sandeau's comedy, "Mlle. de la Seiglière," will be represented to-morrow evening.

The Hippodrome lets itself out this week in dazzling proclamations of a new comic pantomime entitled "Harlequin Mother Goose, or the Fairy Legend of the Golden Egg." Mr. Dercle is the author of the versified introduction, and Mr. Lehman, a veteran of the old Ravel company, and the machinist of the best of their pieces, is the contriver and arranger of the various tricks and transformations. New scenery and new costumes will add luster to the pageant. The characters are to be sustained by the most popular members of the Hippodrome's company. We believe a horse will be introduced. We know that the Terpsichore of Fairy-land will appear, and that her name is Mlle. Angeline, because the bills are explicit upon this point. There will also be a ballet of "Lightning Eyed Young Ladies." Count Hamilton has a story of a wonderful Persian princess, the fire of whose eyes was such that no person could gaze upon them without being stricken blind. The young ladies of the Hippodrome corps are lineal descendants of this dangerous Eastern beauty, but their optical faculties have been happily modified by transmission through successive generations. No visitor need feel it necessary to provide himself with pocket lightning-rods. The corrugated iron of which the Hippodrome building is composed will be sufficient safeguard against accident, in case the antique spirit of the Princess should at times scintillate too fiercely in the orbs of her descendants. We cordially invite attention