THE NEW YORK HERALD.

WHOLE NO. 9297. NEW YORK, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1862. PRICE TWO CENTS.

THE NIAGARA AT HALIFAX.

TWO DAYS LATER FROM EUROPE.

British Official Papers on the American Question.

England's Anxiety at the Prospect of War.

Lord Lyons to Assure Mr. Lincoln of Her "Forbearance" and Strength.

Privateering to be Abolished During the War if America Consented.

Lord John Russell's Reply to the Rebel Commissioners.

The "Fortune of Arms" to Decide Queen Victoria.

INUNDATIONS IN GERMANY.

RUSSIAN SENTENCES ON THE POLISH PRIESTS,

&c., &c., &c.

HALIFAX, Feb. 22, 1862.

The steamship Niagara, from Liverpool February 8, at one P. M., via Queenstown 9th, arrived here at nine o'clock this evening. She has forty passengers for Boston, but no specie for that port. She brought £50,000 for Halifax. She passed the Arabia, bound to Liverpool, on the 9th.

The Niagara sailed at half-past four o'clock A. M. for Boston, where she will be due to-morrow afternoon.

Mr. Slidell arrived at Lodge's Hotel, La Nore, Paris, January 29.

The Prince of Wales had left England for Trieste, *en route* for the East. He travels in strict *incognito*.

The official *Gazette* publishes an order of the Privy Council removing the prohibition against the export of saltpetre, arms, ammunition, and all other articles lately prohibited.

A despatch from Vienna, of the 8th instant, states that in the negotiations respecting the elevation of the Archduke Maximilian to the throne of Mexico there is no question of the cession of Venetia.

A new Canadian Bishopric, to be called the Bishopric of Ontario, is created. Rev. J. L. Wise is appointed its first Bishop.

Gloomy accounts are published of the British Columbia gold fields, and were attracting considerable attention.

Communication is interrupted throughout almost all Germany, in consequence of inundations.

The new Cunard screw steamer China had arrived at Liverpool. She takes her place in the line for New York March 1. Her trial trip showed great speed.

The Hibernian, from Portland, arrived at Liverpool on the 9th.

THE AMERICAN QUESTION.

British State Papers on the Crisis Submitted to Parliament—Voluminous Correspondence Relative to the Nashville and Tuscarora—The Cabinet Ready to Advise the "Belligerents"—What Lord Lyons Has to Say to Mr. Lincoln—Lord John Russell's Answer to the Rebel Commissioners—When and How England Would Give Up Privateering, &c.

Six sets of Parliamentary papers concerning the American civil war, &c., have been laid before Parliament. Not fewer than forty-five official communications have passed about the Nashville and Tuscarora.

In January, 1861, Earl Russell instructed Lord Lyons, in case of advice being asked by President Lincoln's Cabinet, to reply that her Majesty's government will decline to give any, *unless both parties apply for counsel.*

The policy of the British government in February, 1861, in the event of President Lincoln raising a question with Great Britain, is laid down in the following terms:—

Her Majesty's government would in the first place be *very forbearing.* They would show by their acts how highly they valued the relations of peace and amity with the United States, but they would take care to let the government which multiplied provocations and sought for quarrels understand that their forbearance *sprang from a consciousness of strength, and not from timidity or weakness.*

Lord Russell reports the substance of a *conversation* he had with Yancey, Rost and Mann, the delegates who waited upon him to urge the recognition of the confederates.

His answer to these gentlemen was, that England *would observe strict neutrality.* Earl Russell said:—*Her Majesty cannot acknowledge the independence of nine States until the fortune of arms or a more peaceful mode of negotiation shall have more clearly determined the respective positions of the two belligerents.*

There is a short note, written as late as December 20, which shows that *even then the British Ministry believed in the probability of a war with the United States.*

Lord Lyons is directed to speak with Mr. Seward on the subject of letters of marque, and to say that in case of war, *Great Britain is willing to abolish privateering as between the two nations if the President will make a similar agreement on the part of the United States.*

THE ARREST OF AN ANGLO-CANADIAN.

In the House of Lords, on the 7th, Earl Carnarvon inquired as to the truth of the arrest and imprisonment of a Canadian subject named Shepperd, by order of Mr. Seward. He commented severely on the conduct of the United States, if the facts were correctly reported, and especially on the demand that Shepperd should take the oath of allegiance to the United States, as a condition of release.

Earl Russell, who was all but inaudible, was understood to say that the main facts of the case were correctly reported, but as soon as Lord Lyons was informed of it, he applied to Mr. Seward, who stated that the oath of allegiance was tendered to Shepherd, under the belief that he was an American, and his release was subsequently obtained on the condition that he should not go into the Southern States.

The federal government claimed that, in an extraordinary emergency, like the present, the President must be invested with extraordinary powers, extending to foreign residents as well as American citizens. Her Majesty's government entered strong remonstrances to this, and there was no objection to produce the correspondence.

Earl Carnarvon said he should certainly move for the papers. He hoped the government would not be content with remonstrances, but would also demand compensation.

MR. GREGORY, M. P., ON THE BLOCKADE.

In the House of Commons, on the 7th inst., Mr. Gregory said he refrained the previous evening from addressing the House while the Address to the Queen was being discussed, because he thought it undesirable to introduce topics which might give rise to debate; but he felt that the blockade of the Southern ports by the federal government was wholly ineffective, and simply a blockade upon paper. On a future occasion he should be in a position to show the character of the blockade was such that, in justice to both of the belligerent parties, it ought to receive full discussion at the hands of the government.

Mr. G. P. Bentinck expressed satisfaction at Mr. Gregory's announcement to bring the question of the blockade before the House. His own opinion was that a recognition of the paper blockade would be in violation of the rules of international law, and it was the duty of the country to consider seriously the position, which we were placed.

THE SUMTER AND THE COAL MERCHANTS.

Late Gibraltar advices received in Liverpool represent the privateer Sumter as detained at Gibraltar from difficulty in obtaining coal. A meeting of the parties connected with the coaling business there resolved not to supply coal to the Sumter except for cash, the paper offered in payment, although on good houses, being deemed eligible. The same advices represent the crew of the Sumter as fine fellows, but nautical men say the ship has no fight in her.

THE LONDON TIMES AS A FINANCIER AND PROPHET.

The London *Times*, in an editorial on American affairs, says that in the last six months America has contrived to spend more money in a shorter time, and to less purpose, than any people who ever lived on the face of the earth, and that is all that has literally been done during this period. It proceeds to argue that the subjugation of the South and a future union has become impossible.

THE PRESS ON THE SESSION OF PARLIAMENT.

The London journals generally regard the Queen's speech as a negative, and *so far a satisfactory document.*

The London Herald (opposition) has scarcely a remark to offer on the ministerial programme, and says it is difficult to criticise blank paper. The session of Parliament opened calmly, and with no show of opposition, and the indications were that the session would be a quiet one.

The *Globe*, however, admits that Parliament is about equally divided, and that the conservatives might, if they chose, bring about serious complications. It intimates that, in the even of defeat, Lord Palmerston would dissolve Parliament and appeal to the country.

FRENCH OPINION ON NEUTRAL RIGHTS.

M. D'Hautefeuille, the well known writer on international law, urges in the *Revue Contemporaine* the meeting of a congress to settle the rights of belligerents at sea, and the formation of a league of armed neutrality to protect the commerce of neutral Powers in the event of maritime war.

France.

The Bank of France on the 6th reduced its rate of discounts from 4½ to 4 per cent.

The Chamber of Deputies had commenced the discussion of the bill for the conversion of the 4½ per cent rentes. M. Darimon strongly opposed it.

The Paris *Constitutionnel* says the rumor that English capitalists had contracted to loan £4,000,000 to the French government is not correct, but such circumstantial particulars are given in the London papers that there is no doubt the arrangement has been made.

The Bourse was firm; rentes 71f. 40c.

LONDON, Feb. 9, 1862.

The French Chamber of Deputies has passed the bill converting the rentes. They close firm at 71f. 45c.

PARIS, Feb. 9, 1862.

The *Moniteur* says that the bill for the conversion of the rentes will be presented to the Senate to-morrow. The interest on Treasury bills is fixed at 3 and 3½ per cent, according to the time of their falling due.

Yesterday evening, in the Corps Legislatif, M. Vintry defended and M. Picard opposed the bill for the conversion of the rentes. The discussion will be resumed to-day.

The *Moniteur* says the English journals announce that the French government is negotiating at London for a loan of four million pounds. This assertion is erroneous.

Italy.

TURIN, Feb. 9, 1862.

The *Italia* publishes a circular from the Minister of the Interior exhorting prefects to prevent, by the exercise of legitimate influences, popular manifestations like those recently made in Parma and other towns.

TURIN, Feb. 8, 1862.

The *Official Gazette*, replying to the rumors that the government encouraged the manifestations against the temporal power at Rome, that it had decreed the recall of Mazzini, and, by means of secret encouragement, was preparing a clandestine expedition, declares that the government will not depart from the laws of an upright and loyal policy, and will endeavor to seize every opportunity which presents itself of assuring in an ample and fruitful manner the desires of the nation.

Spain.

The Cortes was discussing the treaty with Mexico.

Martinez de la Rosa was dangerously ill. His life was despaired of.

M. Mon was summoned from Paris to take his place as President of the Chamber of Deputies.

MADRID, Feb. 7—P. M.

Senor Martinez de la Rosa is dead.

Poland.

Advices from Warsaw announce that judgment has been pronounced by court martial on the Catholic priests imprisoned in the citadel. Four canons were condemned to transportation to Siberia, and one to imprisonment in the fortress.

Denmark.

COPENHAGEN, Feb. 9, 1862.

The government has obtained an important victory, as the ministerial project for the modification of the quorum in the Rigarsed was adopted yesterday by a great majority after a protracted discussion.

Turkey.

A Turkish squadron, under Osmar Pasha, had left Constantinople for the Adriatic, laden with munitions of war

India.

Bombay papers to January 13 represent the product of the last cotton crop as pouring into Bombay from the various cotton districts.

Commercial Intelligence.

THE LONDON MONEY MARKET.

The funds were firmer on the 7th instant, and advanced ¼d. notwithstanding the unfavorable bank returns, and a less easy appearance of the money market. For choice bills 2½ a 2¾ was generally demanded, the impression being that the loan to the French government will cause the rates for money to rule higher.

It was reported that about £2,000,000 would be remitted to Paris during February—the first instalment on the 13th. This caused a large demand for money at the Bank.

LONDON, Feb. 7, 1862.

Consols closed at 92⅞ a 93. The weekly return of the Bank of England shows a decrease of £224,000.

American securities are firmer; sales of Illinois Central shares 44 a 43 discount. Erie Railroad shares 28½ a 29.

LIVERPOOL COTTON MARKET.

The week's cotton market was received per Bohemian.

LIVERPOOL BREADSTUFF MARKET.

The breadstuff market generally has a downward tendency. The various circulars report:—Flour easier at 28s. a 31s. Wheat is quiet with a downward tendency; red Western 10s. 10d. a 12s.; red Southern 12s. 2d. a 12s. 3d., white Western 12s. 6d., white Southern 12s. 9d. a 13s. Corn dull with a decline of 3d.; mixed corn 30s. 9d. a 31s., white corn 34s. a 37s.

LIVERPOOL PROVISION MARKET.

The provision market still rules downward. Messrs. Bigland, Athya & Co. report:—Beef still declining. Pork heavy, and declined 2s. 6d. Bacon quiet. Lard very dull at 43s. 6d. a 45s. Tallow flat.

LIVERPOOL PRODUCE MARKET.

Ashes dull at 33s. for pots and pearls. Sugar quiet at a decline of 6d. Coffee steady. Rice quiet and steady. Linseed heavy at a decline of 2s. Linseed Oil—Sales small at £34 a £35. Cod Oil—Transactions light. Rosin dull at 12s. 3d. a 13s. Spirits of turpentine nominal.

LONDON MARKET.

Messrs. Baring report:—Breadstuffs dull. Iron steady, but easier. Sugar firm. Coffee firm. Tea—The market is steady for common Congou. Rice dull. Spirits turpentine steady at 46s. 9d. Tallow quiet and steady. Sperm oil £39 6s. Cod oil dull, and declined 10s. Linseed cakes firmer.

THE LATEST MARKETS.

LIVERPOOL, Feb. 9, 1862.

The sales of cotton yesterday reached 6,000 bales, including 2,000 bales to speculators and exporters, the market closing firmer at unchanged quotations. Breadstuffs closed dull. Provisions inactive.

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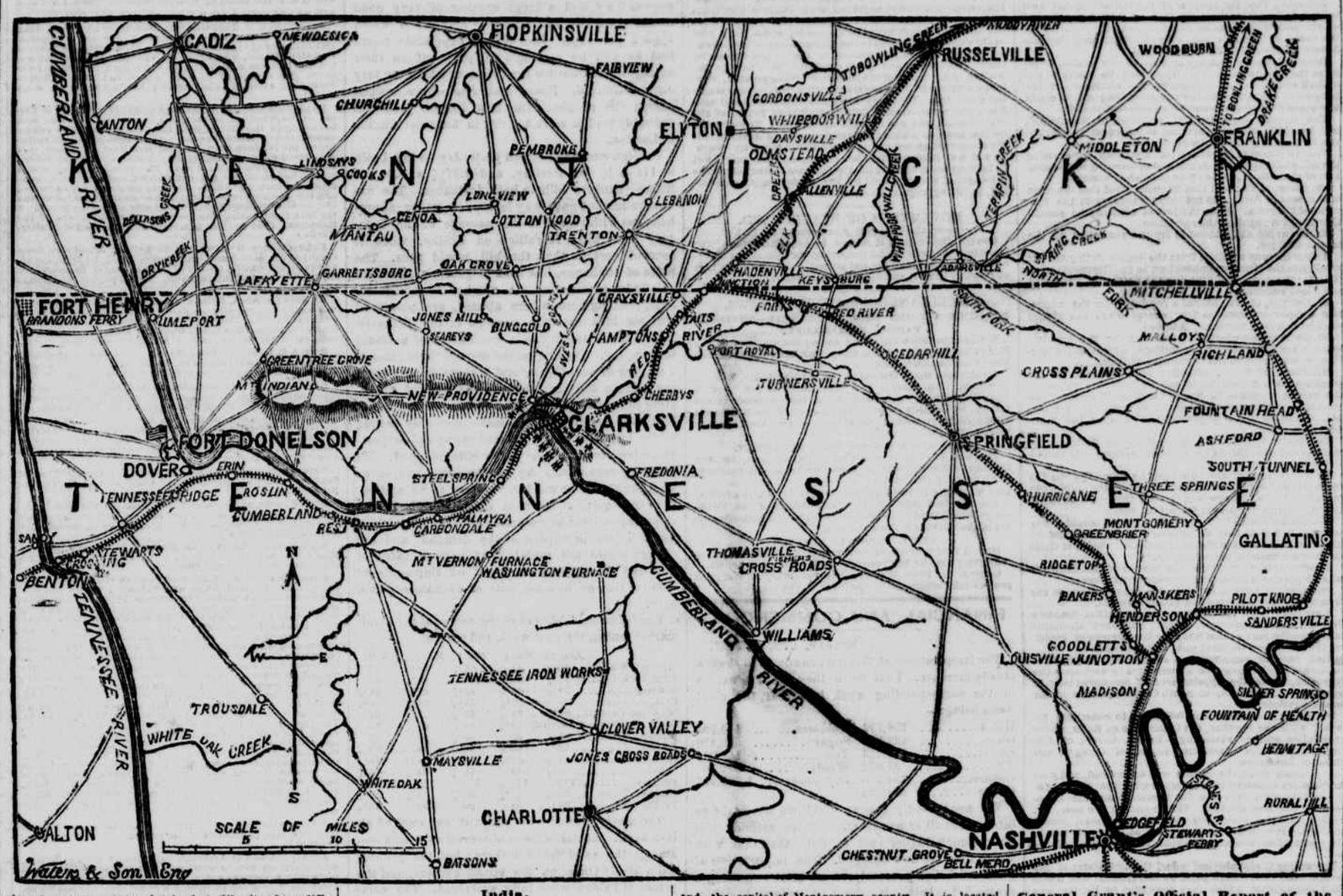
HAVRE COTTON MARKET.

Sales of cotton for the week, 5,500 bales; tres ordinaire, 1,59c.; bas, 1,52c. The market is quiet and irregular. The stock in port amounts to 112,000 bales.

THE CAPTURE OF CLARKSVILLE, TENNESSEE.

The Seat of War in Middle Tennessee---Flag Officer Foote at Clarksville---Nashville Threatened.



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THE CAPTURE OF CLARKSVILLE.

The Union Troops Occupy the Village—The Rebels Beat a Hasty Retreat—Sketch of Clarksville and Its Defences—The Value of the Cumberland River—Map of the Surrounding Country—The Rebels Nearly Surrounded.

The official report of Commodore Foote, of the United States Navy, published yesterday, gives us the decisive information that Clarksville is in the possession of the Union forces. On the appearance of the gunboats the citizens, being alarmed lest the village should be bombarded, at least two thirds of them fled from the spot. Commodore Foote, however, had an interview with the Mayor and the Hon. Cave Johnson, and expressed his views and intentions of not injuring the property or persons of any who would at once return to their allegiance; and, at the request of those gentlemen, issued a proclamation, assuring all peaceably disposed persons that they may safely resume their business avocations, providing that they gave up all military stores and equipments in their possession or under their charge. The authorities were held responsible for the fulfilment of the latter portion of the proclamation.

The officers of the gunboat fleet found, during their voyage from Fort Donelson to Clarksville, that a Union sentiment prevailed along the river, and that white flags were flying in every direction, doubtless raised from the terror the rebels felt in relation to the gunboats.

The rebel troops when they left Clarksville retreated in the direction of Nashville, destroying before they left the railroad bridge across the Red river and setting fire to the splendid railroad bridge across the Cumberland. Later advices, however, state that the latter was but little damaged. The citizens of Clarksville remonstrated against this wilful destruction of property, which, as they had evacuated the place, could not apparently have been a military necessity, as the road does not lead to Nashville but their remonstrances were all in vain. They also set fire to the iron rolling mill belonging to the Hon. John Bell, which had been for sometime previously used by the rebels as military works.

A large quantity of rebel stores were captured at the same time by the Union forces when they occupied the village. This, without doubt, shows that the rebels retreated in great haste, the capture of such places as Forts Donelson and and Henry giving them but little confidence in their defences at Clarksville. All the fortifications on either side of the Red river were destroyed and taken possession of by the Union troops. Russellville, on the railroad leading from Bowling Green to Clarksville, has also been taken possession of by our forces.

SKETCH OF CLARKSVILLE.

Clarksville was a thriving post village in Tennessee, and the capital of Montgomery county. It is located on the right or north side of the Cumberland river, at the point where the Red river empties itself into the former stream. It is situated at about fifty miles to the northwest of Nashville, the capital of the State. In its prosperous days it had a population of between three and five thousand persons, and had considerable trade. There were at one time two good banks established in the place, and four or five newspaper offices. On the whole, previous to the breaking out of the rebellion, it gave great promise of being a rising place, but at the present time it appears to have greatly retrograded.

DEFENCES, NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL.

In the neighborhood of Clarksville, and for some distance farther up the river, are a number of bluffs, some of which are precipitous and difficult of access. These have been made use of for the purpose of fortification, and extensive and formidable rebel works have been in the course of construction there for two or three months, especially along the Red river. A large number of heavy guns were reported to have been shipped to this point, for the purpose, so it was said, of protecting the railroad bridge and the communication with the capital of the State. It was also reported that ten thousand men left Bowling Green two or three weeks since to reinforce this point, and further that General Hardee had been in command of the post. If so they very hastily left when they found the Union forces were on the road to that place. The railroad from Louisville via Bowling Green and Russellville passes through the village, and it crosses the Cumberland at this point by a valuable bridge. What troops may recently have been at these two last named places were doubtless sent forward to Clarksville. As Bowling Green, Russellville and Clarksville are now in the hands of the Union troops a road is now open to Nashville, by which it is not at all unlikely our troops may march upon the rebels at that place.

THE PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AT CLARKSVILLE.

Telegraphic information states that General Smith, of General Grant's column, had taken military possession of Clarksville. The following is the composition of his staff:—

COMMANDER OF THIRD DIVISION.

Acting Major General—Brig. Gen. CHAS. F. SMITH, of Pennsylvania.

Acting Adjutant General—Capt. T. G. Newzham, United States Army.

Medical Director—H. S. Hewitt, M. D., volunteers.

Division Quartermaster—Capt. Geo. A. Pierce, volunteers.

Division Commissary—Capt. John S. Cox.

Chief of Engineers—Capt. Rziha, Nineteenth infantry, United States Army.

Chief of Ordnance—Capt. J. A. Newstadter.

Captain of Engineers—Imre Radrich.

Aid-de-Camp—Lieut. Jas. F. Froth, Eleventh Indiana Volunteers.

The force we do not think it politic to publish at present.

OUR MAP OF THE VICINITY.

We this day present our readers with a handsome map of the vicinity, drawn by a reliable person, from official sources of information. It embraces all the important points in the vicinity of Nashville, taking Russellville, now in the hands of the Union troops, as its northern point of starting, and Fort Henry on the west, and going down to Nashville on the south, and Gallatin on the east. The proximity of Clarksville and Fort Donelson is apparent at a glance, and the water communication between both those points and Nashville clearly laid down. The railroads from Bowling Green via Franklin on the east and Russellville and Hadenville Junction on the west is also shown. Both these lines join at Louisville Junction, sometimes called Edgefield Junction, only ten miles north of Nashville, and columns by both roads will doubtless unite at this point, and march to that city.

But the water communication is more valuable in a military and naval point of view. Commodore Foote reports that he intended to proceed up the Cumberland. We therefore reproduce our sketch of that river.

THE CUMBERLAND RIVER.

The Cumberland river, one of the largest affluents of the Ohio, is very circuitous in its course. It rises in the Cumberland Mountains of Kentucky, near the southeastern portion of the State, and, flowing westward and southward, past Somerset and Mill Spring, the recent scene of the defeat and death of Zollicoffer, enters Tennessee between Jackson and Overton counties. After making an extensive circuit through Middle Tennessee, passing in its course Carthage and the city of Nashville, it turns towards the northwest, and again enters Kentucky, about ten miles to the east of the Tennessee river. Between Nashville and this point it passes Clarksville and Dover. Its course, after entering the State of Kentucky, is nearly parallel with that of the Tennessee river until it enters the Ohio at Smithland. The whole length of the river is estimated at about six hundred miles.

On carefully studying our map, it will at once be seen how our forces are crowding the rebels. They will have to make way for them, for they are going southward with steady strides and with sure foothold, and those who oppose them must take the consequences.

LECTURE BY DR. BARBER.—Dr. Barber is to give a lecture at the Mercantile Library Lecture Room this evening at eight o'clock. The subject is the "Downfall of Nations;" moral, political and social causes; effects on the progressive condition of mankind.

General Grant's Official Report of the Capture of Fort Donelson.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY IN THE FIELD,
FORT DONELSON, Feb. 16, 1862.

Gen. G. W. CULLOM, Chief of Staff, Department of Missouri:—

GENERAL—I am pleased to announce to you the unconditional surrender, this morning, of Fort Donelson, with twelve to fifteen thousand prisoners, at least forty pieces of artillery, and a large amount of stores, horses, mules, and other public property.

I left Fort Henry on the 12th inst., with a force of about 15,000 men, divided into two divisions, under the command of Generals McClernand and Smith. Six regiments were sent around by water the day before, convoyed by a gunboat, or, rather, started one day later than one of the gunboats, and with instructions not to pass it.

The troops made the march in good order, the head of the column arriving within two miles of the fort at twelve o'clock M. At this point the enemy's pickets were met and driven in.

The fortifications of the enemy were from this point gradually approached and surrounded, with occasional skirmishing on the line. The following day, owing to the non-arrival of the gunboat and reinforcements sent by water, no attack was made; but the investment was extended on the flanks of the enemy, and drawn closer to his works, with skirmishing all day. The evening of the 13th the gunboats and reinforcements arrived. On the 14th a gallant attack was made by Flag Officer Foote upon the enemy's works with his fleet. The engagement lasted probably one hour and a half, and bid fair to result favorably to the cause of the Union, when two unlucky shots disabled two of the armored gunboats, so that they were carried back by the current. The remaining two were very much disabled also, having received a number of heavy shots about the pilot house and other parts of the vessels. After these mishaps I concluded to make the investment of Fort Donelson as perfect as possible, and partially fortify and await repairs to gunboats. This plan was frustrated, however, by the enemy making a most vigorous attack upon our right wing, commanded by General J. A. McClernand, with a portion of the force under General L. Wallace. The enemy were repelled, after a closely contested battle of several hours, in which our loss was heavy. The officers and particularly field officers, suffered out of proportion. I have not means yet of determining our loss even approximately, but it cannot fall short of 1,200 killed, wounded and missing. Of the latter, I understand, through General Buckner, about two hundred and fifty were taken prisoners. I shall retain enough of the enemy to exchange for them, as they were immediately shipped off and not left for recapture.

About the close of the action the ammunition in the cartridge boxes gave out, which, with the loss of many of the field officers, produced great confusion in the ranks. Seeing that the enemy did not take advantage of this fact, I ordered a charge upon the left—enemy's right—with the division under Gen C. F. Smith, which was most brilliantly executed, and gave to our arms full assurance of victory. The battle lasted until dark, giving us possession of part of their intrenchments. An attack was ordered upon their other flank, after the charge by Gen. Smith was commenced, by the divisions under Generals McClernand and Wallace, which, notwithstanding the hours of exposure to a heavy fire in the forepart of the day, was gallantly made and the enemy further repulsed. At the points thus gained, night having come on, all the troops encamped for the night, feeling that a complete victory would crown their labors at an early hour in the morning. This morning, at a very early hour, Gen. S. B. Buckner sent a message to our camp under a flag of truce, proposing an armistice, &c. A copy of the correspondence which ensued is herewith accompanied.

I cannot mention individuals who specially distinguished themselves, but leave that to division and brigade officers, whose reports will be forwarded as soon as received. To division commanders, however, Generals McClernand, Smith and Wallace, I must do the justice to say that each of them were with their commands in the midst of danger, and were always ready to execute all orders, no matter what the exposure to themselves.

At the hour the attack was made on General McClernand's command I was absent, having received a note from Flag Officer Foote, requesting me to go and see him, he being unable to call.

My personal staff—Colonel T. D. Webster, Chief of Staff; Colonel J. Riggin, Jr., Volunteer Aid; Captain S. A. Rawling, Acting Adjutant General; Captains C. B. Lagow and W. S. Hillyer, Aids, and Lieutenant Colonel V. B. McPherson, Chief Engineer—all are deserving of personal mention for their gallantry and services.

For full details and reports, and particulars, reference is made to the reports of the engineer, medical director and commanders of brigades and divisions, to follow.

I am, General, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
U. S. GRANT, Brigadier General.

The Navy.

The United States steam sloop-of-war San Jacinto will be put in commission at the Boston Navy Yard about the 25th inst. The following is a list of the officers of this ship:—

Captain—Wm. Ronckendorff.
First Lieutenant—R. Chandler.
Second Lieutenant—Beatty P. Smith.
Surgeon—John A. Lockwood.
Paymaster—Thomas C. Masten.
Chief Engineer—Mortimer Kellogg.
Assistant Surgeon—Geo. D. Slocum.
Acting Masters—Henry J. Coop, Sumner Withington and D. G. McRitchie.
Lieutenants of Marines—L. L. Dawson and Robert Kidd.
Second Assistant Engineers—H. C. McIlvaine, George W. Hall and Henry S. Davids.
Third Assistant Engineers—Edwin Wells, Henry W. Scott, Edward Lincoln and Nathan P. Towne.
Acting Masters' Mates—Thomas Smith J. D. Weed, A. H. Fuller and L. C. Howland.
Paymaster's Clerk—Philip T. Roache.
Captain's Clerk—W. D. Walke.
Gunner—C. A. Stephenson.
Boatswain—John Harley.
Carpenter—W. F. Laighton.
Sailmaker—L. B. Wakeman.

INTERESTING FROM THE SOUTH.

MEETING OF THE REBEL CONGRESS.

Official Reports of the First and Second Days' Proceedings.

Speech of Speaker Bocock, of the House.

CANVASS OF THE ELECTORAL VOTES.

Jeff. Davis and A. H. Stephens Receives all the Votes.

The Release of the Union Prisoners at the South,

&c., &c., &c.

We have received another interesting collection of late papers, among which are the Norfolk *Day Book*, Feb. 20; Richmond *Dispatch*, Feb. 18, 19, and 20, and the Richmond *Enquirer* of Feb. 19 and 20. From these papers we take the following items of late Southern news.

THE NEW REBEL CONGRESS.

SENATE.

FIRST DAY.

RICHMOND, Feb. 18, 1862.

The Senate convened at noon. The Vice President elect of the Confederate States, Hon. A. H. Stephens, in in the chair.

The Vice President, under the authority of the constitution, formally opened the session of the Senate. He called the attention of Senators to the published acts passed by the Provisional Congress, and caused the temporary clerk to read the last clause of the permanent constitution; also the act of the Provisional Congress putting in operation the permanent government of the Confederate States, and the act supplemental to the same.

The roll being called, the following Senators answered to their names:—

Arkansas—Messrs. Mitchell and Johnson.
Florida—Messrs. Maxwell and Baker.
Georgia—Mr. Hill.
Kentucky—Mr. Simms.
Louisiana—Mr. Sparrow
Mississippi—Mr. Brown.
Missouri—Messrs. Clark and Peyton.
North Carolina—Messrs. Davis and Dortch.
South Carolina—Messrs. Barnwell and Orr.
Tennessee—Messrs. Haynes and Henry.
Texas—Mr. Oldham.
Virginia—Messrs. Hunter and Preston.

Nineteen Senators being present (a quorum), the oath to support the constitution was then administered. The Senators taking the oath in parties of four at a time.

The VICE PRESIDENT announced that the first business before the Senate was the election of a President of the Senate *pro tem.*

Mr. DAVIS, of North Carolina, moved that the Hon. R. M. T. Hunter, of Virginia, be unanimously chosen President of the Senate *pro tem.* Carried.

Mr. Hunter was conducted to the chair by Messrs. Hill of Georgia, Johnson of Arkansas, and Simms of Kentucky, and the Vice President retired.

Mr. HUNTER said that all his thanks were due for this high honor, and the best he could promise in return was, that he would strive to discharge his duties with energy and impartiality.

The election of a Secretary of the Senate was then in order.

On the sixth ballot, James H. Nash, of South Carolina, having a majority of all the votes cast, was declared the Secretary of the Senate, and came forward and was duly qualified.

Mr. ORR, of South Carolina, moved that the temporary Secretary of the Senate be sent to the House of Representatives, with the information that the Senate was organized. Carried.

On motion of Mr. ORR, the Senate proceeded to the election of a Doorkeeper.

Two ballots were had, the last resulting in the election of Mr. James Page, of North Carolina.

During the balloting Mr. Wigfall, the Senator from Texas, appeared in his seat and subsequently took the oath.

On motion of Mr. ORR the daily hour for the meeting of the Senate was fixed at twelve o'clock M.

The Senate then adjourned.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Precisely at twelve M. the members of the House of Representatives were called to order by Hon. Howell Cobb, of Georgia, President of the late Provisional Congress.

Fervent and appropriate prayer was offered by Rev. James A. Duncan.

The presiding officer then caused to be read an act of the Provisional Congress, whereby it was made his duty to preside at the organization of the House of Representatives of the permanent Congress. In virtue of the same authority he appointed as Clerk *pro tem* William F. Gordon, Esq., of Virginia.

The roll of members was then called by States, and these taken in alphabetical order. The following members were found to be present:—

Alabama—Messrs. Dargan, Chilton, Pugh, Curry, Rawles, Clopton, Lyon.
Arkansas—Messrs. Batson, Royston, Garland, Hanly.
Florida—Messrs. Dorkins, Hilton.
Georgia—Messrs. Kenan, Holt, A. R. Wright, Gartrell, Clarke, Trippe, Lewis, Strickland.
Kentucky—Messrs. Machen, Crockett, Read, Ewing, H. W. Bruce, Moore, Breckinridge, Elliott.
Louisiana—Messrs. Kenner, Villere, Perkins, Conrad, Marshall, Dupre.
Mississippi—Messrs. McRae, Clapp, Davis, Welsh, Singleton, Barksdale.
Missouri—Messrs. Bell, Vest, Conrow, Cook, Freeman, Harris.
North Carolina—Messrs. Bridges, Kenan, McDowell, Ashe, McLean, Lander, Gaither, Davidson.
South Carolina—Messrs. Boyce, Miles, Bonham, McQueen, Farrow.
Tennessee—Messrs. Currin, Foote, Menes, Jones, Swan, Tibbs, Gardenhyer, Heiskill.
Texas—Messrs. Wilcox, Graham, Herbert, Wright, Gray, Sexton.
Virginia—Messrs. Chambliss, Lyons, Pryor, Bocock, Goode, Dejarnette, Wm. Smith, Boteler, Staples, Preston, Jenkins, Johnson, Russell.

The following members failed to answer to their names:—

Alabama—Messrs. Smith and Foster.
Georgia—Messrs. Hartridge and Munnerlynn.
Kentucky—Messrs. Crisman, Burnett, Hodge and Ely M. Bruce.
Mississippi—Mr. Chambers.
Missouri—Mr. Hyer.
North Carolina—Messrs. Smith and Arringt
South Carolina—Mr. Ayer.
Tennessee—Messrs. Atkins and Gentry.
Virginia—Messrs. Garnett, Holcombe and Baldwin.

Total present, eighty-seven. Total absent, eighteen.

The presiding officer announced that a quorum was present, and then proceeded to administer to the members the oath of office. For this purpose they were called by States, the members from each State having the following oath administered to them:—"You and each of you do solemnly swear that you will support the constitution of the Confederate States of America—so help you God."

The presiding officer then announced that the election of Speaker was next in order.

Mr. H. S. FOOTE, of Tennessee, nominated Thomas S. Bocock, of Virginia, for that office. He paid a high tribute to his qualifications.

Mr. Bocock was elected without opposition.

Mr. BOCOCK, on taking the chair, addressed the House as follows:—

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—I return to you my sincere thanks for the honor you have done me in selecting me to preside over your deliberations during this the first Congress under our permanent constitution. And I desire to say that it will be my one great aim, in discharging the duties of this office, so to conduct myself as to show to you and to the world that your confidence has not been altogether misapplied. I may be permitted to say that I have a firm determination, so far as I may be able, to maintain the dignity and preseve the decorum of this body; to administer its rules with firmness and courtesy, and to conduct its business with the strictest impartiality. If such a determination, united with a sincere desire to see our legislation take such shape as will best tend to secure the independence, maintain the honor, and advance the welfare of this entire confederacy—if this could command success—I am sure I might expect to succeed. But other qualifications are requisite, about which it is not for me to promise. If in anything I may fall short, I trust that the same kind partiality which has called me to this position, will throw the mantle of charity over my defects, and will give me, in every time of trial, that kind co-operation and generous support which my deficiences may require. The unanimity with which you have made this election is a happy augury of the spirit with which your proceedings will be governed. This is no time for resentments, no time for jealousies or heartburnings. Influenced by a great common purpose, sharing together the same rich hope, and united by a common destiny, let us hush every murmur of discontent and banish every feeling of personal grief. Here let us know no man save as a co-laborer in the same great cause, sustaining those whom circumstances may designate to go forward; seeking nothing for the sake merely of personal gratification, but willing rather to yield everything for the public good—"in honor preferring one another." That some of you, influenced by momentary impulse, should grow restive under the enforcements of these rules which you may make for your own government would be a matter neither of surprise nor of complaint. But he will prove himself either a weak or a bad man who, on reflection, fails to call back his wayward spirit and subject it to necessary restraint. Submission to constitu