propriety of the citizens raising the national flag on Fort St. Mark, a suggestion which the authorities acquiesced in cheerfully and with alacrity. In fifteen minutes after the banner of the republic floated gayly over the towers of Fort St. Mark, placed there by the Mayor of the city, without a single federal officer or soldier being present to witness its ascendency.

The victory was not the less complete because bloodless.

The citizens were found to entertain the strongest Union sentiment, and they manifested, in every way, their joy on the restoration of the old flag on the place it had so long waved triumphantly, and they indicated, in more ways than one, their satisfaction and pleasure over the supremacy of the Union arms. In short, they were very glad that federal authority had driven out rebel malcontents from their city, and they felt more happy when they were assured that we should hereafter hold the place. No better evidences of loyalty could have been manifested than those shown by the people of St. Augustine, and we are all satisfied that they are honest and true in those expressions.

A little incident occurred while Captain Rodgers and Mr. Dennis were walking from the landing to the City Hall, which will illustrate the demented condition of the rebels in the South.

While engaged in conversation with the Mayor, as they were walking up the street, a lady appeared, and addressed Captain Rodgers in the most excited and singular manner, exclaiming:—"The cowardly men have run away from the city, but," striking her bosom in the most frantic and melo-dramatic style, "you will find some brave hearts among the women!" Her tragic attitude and speech did not produce the effect intended, and the lady subsided. It proved to be no less a personage than Mrs. Loring, wife of the Mr. Loring who was killed by Dr. Graham at the St. Nicholas Hotel some years since. She is the proprietor of the Planters' Hotel here, and, under the secession *regime*, is of considerable importance; but under the new order of things is looked upon as a harmless fanatic, and allowed to beat the "cotton" in front and berate loyal citizens as much as she chooses. After the interview between Captain Rodgers and the municipal authorities had terminated so satisfactorily to both parties, the former essayed a return to the Wabash outside at about five o'clock. It was found impossible to cross the bar with safety, in consequence of the low state of the tide, and the party was obliged to return here. On landing, they proceeded to the Magnolia House, kept by mine host Major Buffington, a very clever fellow and *au fait* in keeping a first class hostelrie. There they found comfortable quarters and enjoyed a good dinner off of wild turkey, bacon, corn bread, sausages, and "coffee," made from sweet potatoes, cut in slices and parched like coffee, and ground like the "aromatic berry," from which they made a capital meal. They had no butter, that being a luxury long cut off by the blockade, and the salt on the table was made on the cooking stove of the hotel from sea water, and retained a little of its bitter flavor. It was white and clean, but not equal to common rock salt. Major Buffington showed his guests every attention, and made them as comfortable as they could have been at home.

During the evening the Major, accompanied by a number of the most prominent citizens of the city, called upon Captain Rodgers at the hotel, and spent the evening with him in an agreeable and pleasant manner. The most friendly sentiments were mutually expressed, and the evening passed pleasantly and quickly.

As the Wabash's cutter's crew were unarmed, being under a flag of truce, Captain Rodgers suggested that it would be a proper precaution if the citizens should throw out a picket or patrol on the main avenues of approach to the city, to guard against an attack or surprise. The suggestion was adopted, and a dozen of the leading gentlemen of the city armed themselves with muskets found in the fort, and did picket duty during the balance of the night faithfully and well. Is that not a good proof of loyalty and an evidence of good faith in deeds?

On the following day Captain Rodgers and Mr. Dennis returned to the Wabash, greatly pleased at the evidences of a strong Union sentiment in the important city of St. Augustine.

About eight hours before Captain Rodgers landed the two companies of rebel troops, called the "Blues," had decamped in boats, and had left for Smyrna—a village on the coast, fifty miles south, where there are about seven hundred men. At Smyrna the steamers Cecil, Carolina and another, which have done a flourishing business in running the blockade with munitions of war, are reported as lying at anchor in the harbor. It is said that there are immense quantities of munitions of war yet remaining at Smyrna, and I learned that the Commodore proposes to pay it an early visit. But of that more hereafter.

A few guns were found in St. Mark, unspiked and in perfect order. A small quantity of gunpowder of an inferior quality was also found; but it is hardly good enough to fire salutes with.

Very few of the citizens, comparatively speaking, have left town. Not more than one hundred have fled the city, mostly—in fact, entirely—secessionists, among whom were the wife and family of Gen. Hardee, of "Hardee's Tactics" fame. Over fifteen hundred inhabitants remain. Business is carried on as usual, and I learn that the business men propose to reopen trade with the North at an early day. Two-thirds of the inhabitants are Minorcans, a great majority of whom are Union men, or, perhaps, indifferent, and a very few of whom are secessionists. His Honor Mayor Bravo is a Minorcan, and a man of might among them. There are about twenty-five ladies in town, who have openly espoused the Union cause throughout the troubles, and they deserve great credit for their courage and fidelity, sustained under the most perilous and trying circumstances.

The inhabitants are most hospitable and friendly to the Union forces, and endeavor in every way to make them as comfortable as possible. It is really refreshing to a campaigner like myself, who has been from Virginia to Florida during the entire war, and not before found a village that was not deserted, or, if partially occupied, occupied by rebels or cold friends—it is refreshing, I say, to again meet with women and hospitable friends. It repays me for all my discomforts and some of the miseries I have endured in roughing it for eleven months past.

Troops are expected here in a day or two, who will hold the fort and avenues of approach to the town.

St. Augustine is a quaint, curious, dilapidated old town laid out in squares, the streets being straight, narrow and unpaved, and overhung by the wooden balconies of the gray stone houses that crowd on the street on either side, as if they intended to make further encroachments on the narrow way, and finally crush it between their massive walls. The streets are so narrow that it is impossible for carriages to pass abreast, except at one or two points. It is said they were not originally intended for carriages, and that during the Spanish colonial times they were paved with coquina—a natural concretion of sand and small shells, formed on the neighboring sea beach, which may be cut with a spade when fresh, but becomes as hard as stone when exposed to the combined action of the air and sun.

In these days you may see in one or two places traces of the pavement, but, for the most part, nothing but dust is seen, to which the pavement has been ground by the wagons of modern days. The houses are usually of two stories, built with little regard to architectural effects, but wearing a massive and venerable appearance. The gardens between the houses are hidden from the streets by high, thick walls of coquina, and are blooming with flowers of all kinds and green with the leaves of the pomegranate, the delicate orange, now in blossom, and the dark, broad fig tree. The air is loaded with the dreamy odor of the orange blossom and the fragrance of the flowers of the pride of India. The climate now is delightful. The air is as balmy and genial as a June day in New York, and nature seems to have arrayed herself in her most charming attire to captivate the stranger who has entered her realm. I do not wonder that St. Augustine is a great resort for invalids. The climate throughout the year is described as equable and delicious, without those trying, sudden changes that mark the climate of Italy. I could live here forever.

The appearance of the inhabitants is as foreign to your eye as the style of the town itself. Here are descendants of a foreign race—the Minorcas, a peculiar people, comprising a large proportion. The women are not unhandsome, with a light olive complexion and a large black eye. The men are homely and lack enterprise. They gain their livelihood by fishing and hunting, and retain their old peculiar religious and national customs to a great extent. They use the Spanish dialect, and resemble the Spanish in personal appearance.

The religious festivals of the Catholic church, as observed in Minorca, are enjoyed here. Carnivals are regularly observed, and Lent is ushered in by masquerades, dances by night, and processions of masked and grotesque figures by day.

At another time I will write a fuller description of the city, fort, barracks, &c., the customs and habits of the inhabitants and the sports enjoyed.

I must close my letter now to catch the mail for Hilton Head.

Our Expeditionary Correspondence.

STEAMER COSMOPOLITAN,
OFF ST. JOHNS, FLA., March 18, 1862.

Fernandina Quiet—A Large Arrival of Contrabands—Capture of a West India Vessel Trying to Run the Blockade—The Vandalism of the Rebels, &c., &c.

Leaving Hilton Head yesterday afternoon on board the steamer Cahawba, we arrived at Fernandina early this morning. The Cahawba had on board Gen. Sherman and staff, who were on a visit of inspection for the first time to this section of the country since its occupation by the Union troops. Nothing of any importance transpired on the trip. Arriving at Fernandina, General Sherman had a hurried and short interview with General Wright, the latter having just returned from a visit to Jacksonville on the morning of our arrival.

I found nothing of any great interest at Fernandina since my last visit. Everything appeared to be moving along with perfect harmony. Contrabands continue to arrive from the interior and mainland, and there are now in charge of the Provost at this point one hundred and sixty—an increase of some eighty in ten days. There was one thing I noticed in looking through the negro quarters was, and that the contrabands congregated here are of a far more intelligent class than those I have met in other places. Another thing, they are kept at work, and hence are more useful and valuable not only to themselves, but also to the government. The contrabands are of course in clover; that is to say, they are perfectly happy to think they have found as good friends, and so pleasant a change in their life. The idea of freedom is to them a happy condition, although I cannot, for myself, look upon it in the same light. The fact is, a negro was never made for anything else but a servant, and if we undertake to make them their own boss, and, as we find them in Chatham Canada West, and other portions of Canada, they become perfectly worthless. Colonel John Prince—for many years a member of Parliament from the Essex district, Canada West, a year ago in Parliament—remarked he never knew but one honest negro in his life, notwithstanding one sixth of his constituents were negroes.

On our trip down from Hilton Head we had as a prisoner a Captain Henliusser, a native of the West Indies but who had resided for many years within four miles of St. Johns. He was taken on board the schooner Anna, by the United States steamer Bienville, some two weeks ago. His crew consisted of three other persons besides himself, and also a passenger named "Mack." His vessel's cargo was 12,000 bushels of salt, which cost in Nassau, N. P., ten cents per bushel, and was worth $2 50 at Jacksonville.

Arriving off this place, we were hailed by a man running along the beach, with his umbrella in hand. Gen. Sherman ordered our steamer stopped, and a boat was sent on shore. Troops are stationed at this place at Maipert Mills, which, I am glad to say, are still standing—not burned. Our friend who hailed us appeared to be the Catholic priest, named R. Chambon, who was desirious of getting to Jacksonville. He was taken on board and proceeded with us on his trip.

The work of destruction may be seen the entire distance from the mouth of the St. Johns to Jacksonville. The destruction of property has been great, and it is a disgrace to civilized warfare to think the animosity of our Southern friends would so far extend as to destroy indiscriminately the property of friends and foes.

The Search After the America.

OUR JACKSONVILLE CORRESPONDENCE.

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., March 20, 1862.

The Troops on the Lookout for the Rebel Yacht—She was Found, Having been Scuttled and Beached by the Rebels—She will be Saved—The Steamer St. Marys also Found, &c.

On Monday evening, March 11, the gunboat Ellen and steamer Darlington, with two cutters and one launch from the steamer Wabash, each with a howitzer and some sixty men from the ship, left this place, under the command of Captain Stevens, of the steamer, for the purpose of ascertaining the whereabouts of the yacht America, of world renown reputation, and steamer St. Marys, both of which vessels were lying at the dock here the day previous to our arrival, but suddenly departed on first getting sight of our fleet.

On Tuesday morning the expedition arrived at Palatka, a point some forty miles down the St. Johns river. They found the place nearly deserted, and remained but a short time. Proceeding a short distance further on the river, they found a large mill had been destroyed, and some twenty-five miles further on the Ellen got aground near where the yacht America was sunk. This famous yacht has been lying at Jacksonville for some months, in expectation of loading with cotton and running the blockade. She was purchased in England by some Southern gentlemen, who came over in her. It is to be regretted that she should have been allowed to be put to so contemptible a purpose as she was, but it is gratifying to know that she will be rescued from the disgrace that would have attached to her. The yacht is run up high and dry on the shore, scuttled; but will be got off without any serious injury to her.

The Ellen being hard aground, the steamer Darlington, with the launches, went in through Denvers Lake to Haws creek, where, through the intelligence of a negro from Brooks' plantation, on Denvers Lake, who knew where the steamer was, after a run through narrow channels, at times the smokepipe of the Darlington striking the overhanging boughs of the trees, the long lost steamer was found. She is lying in some sixteen feet water, her bows run up on shore and her stearn in the stream. She had been scuttled or her outport valves opened; but it was thought there would be no difficulty in getting her afloat again.

The St. Marys is an iron steamer, 172 feet long, thirty-four feet beam, and nine feet depth of hold. She was built at Wilmingthn, Del., and has been running between Savannah and Charleston, and also down the St. Johns river.

There are supposed to be five other steamers—the Gov. Milton, Silver Creek, Hattie Brock, and two others whose names I could not learn—up in some of the creeks or rivulets tributary to the St. Johns river.

The steamer Darlington came down to-day, and returned this afternoon with a large quantity of barrels, hogsheads, &c., to be used in raising the St. Marys and America.

Lieut. Irwin, of the Wabash, was left in charge of the expedition to raise the America, with the cutters and launches from that ship and crews.

If all the steamers on the river can be found they will make quite an addition to our fleet of vessels and be of great aid and assistance to our cause. They will at once be put into requisition under charge of some of the naval officers, and in a great measure relieve the gunboats of duties they are now engaged in. The value of the shipping we shall take in the St. Johns will probably amount to $200,000—perhaps more. All the steamers are well adapted to the trade, and can, with little trouble, be well armed so as to greatly facilitate the internal traffic.

The Capture of the Emily St. Pierre.

OUR NAVAL CORRESPONDENCE.

UNITED STATES STEAMER JAMES ADGER,
OFF CHARLESTON, S. C., March 18, 1862.

At half-past twelve P. M. to-day sighted a vessel in the offing and immediately weighed anchor and started out to her. As soon as she saw us start in pursuit she shortened sail and hove to. She proved to be the Emile St. Pierre, now hailing from Liverpool and previously from Calcutta, the 28th of November last, and from Sand Heads, December 7.

We sent two officers on board, took possession of her and took her to an anchor—one officer remaining in charge, the other taking the captain and papers to the senior officer, who condemned her as a legal prize to the United States steamer James Adger. A prize crew was put on board and she was sent to Philadelphia.

This ship was built at Bath, Maine, in 1854, and was formerly a Charleston and Liverpool packet, but has been employed for the last three years in the Calcutta and Charleston trade. She had a full cargo of gunnies, and was ostensibly bound to St. Johns, New Brunswick. She showed no colors, nor was any national ensign found on board. A few moments before she was boarded they were observed to throw over the stern a small package, which immediately sunk. She was formerly owned in Charleston, and doubtless is at present.

Many things on board were marked Charleston, and Charleston on the stern had been erased and Liverpool substituted.

Our Hilton Head Correspondence.

HILTON HEAD, S. C., March 27, 1862.

Death of Neptune—March Winds and Flying Sand—Its Insinuating Qualities, and its Bad Effects—Arrival of Contrabands from Charleston—Affairs at Beaufort Unchanged—The Missionaries—How They are Getting Along—The Agriculturists Incompetent—Mr. E. L. Pierce, and What He Proposes To Do—The Missionary Experiment a Failure, and the Causes—The Educational Branch of the Organization—What It Is Doing and How It Is Doing It—Equestrian Exercises of the Band—Stupidity of the Negroes—The Troubles in Missionary Circles—Boston vs. New York—Boston Ahead—State of the Contest and the Principals—How the Reports of the Missionaries are Made—Prevalence of Smallpox and Fevers Among the Contrabands—The Condition and Fare of the Contrabands—What Should Be Done—The Atlantic Bank—Arrival of the Wabash, &c., &c.

There is a lamentable dearth of news on and about Hilton Head Island. Everything is quiet along our lines except the sand, which has become of late exceedingly aspiring and quite unwilling to remain in its usual place. The boisterous March winds have had something to do with this sudden change, and I suppose we may lay all the blame for the dust kicked up of late to old Blowhard himself. I have before now seen dust fly in New York—before, and indeed since, the dusty Hackley plied the broom with his left hand and drew his pay with his good right—but I must, in candor, acknowledge that on Hilton Head you can see, or rather feel, denser clouds of sharp, blinding, penetrating sand, of the most insinuating character, than on Broadway. If any one desires to eat that "peck of dirt," which uncleanly cooks assert is to be eaten before death, and complete the pleasant task in the briefest time and in the most natural manner, let him by all means come to South Carolina and indulge in a little of the "sacred soil." He will find it everywhere and in liberal quantities. This sand, like Jeff. Davis' troops, is of a fleeting character. It fills the atmosphere, penetrates into the closest room, gets into your trunk, encrusts your single linen shirt and quarter bunch of paper collars therein contained, which you are carefully reserving for the first reception of the lady missionaries at Beaufort, and in every way manages to go where it is not needed or desired. Green goggles are becoming exceedingly fashionable as a protection to the eyes, and one at first thinks, in meeting so many, that a fresh importation of Fellows of the Freedman Society has reached us; but the absence of the inevitable umbrella, and presence of clouds of sand, dispel the idea. Really the sand is a most abominable nuisance, and ought to be abated.

I cannot furnish an item of news from Hilton Head, except the arrival of four contrabands yesterday from Charleston. They came off to the Flambeau, Lieutenant Upshur, commanding, while she was lying off Charleston bar. They had possessed themselves of a boat and put out of the harbor at an early hour for sea; were discovered and picked up by the Flambeau. One of them is an intelligent woman, who can read and write, and a keen observer. She reports having read in a late Charleston paper the news of the capture by our forces of Island No. 10, in the Mississippi, but gives us few details.

Consternation is exhibited throughout the city of Charleston, in consequence of some intelligence they have received. Nearly all the women and children have been sent to the back country. Goods and furniture, and everything valuable removable, have been and are being rushed out of the city, to points less exposed to a visit from the Yankees. Many men are anxious to leave; but they are all compelled to remain and to take up arms to defend the town, but all are very fearful that the result will be disastrous to them. The news of the recent victories of Union arms has had a chilling influence upon the chivalry, and they begin to doubt the truth of their favorite axiom, that one South Carolinian can whip five Yankees. The relative abilities of a Yankee and rebel are beginning to look nearly equal, even to chivalry itself. The dashing fights in the West, Burnside's brilliant and successful attack on Newbern, in a neighboring State, and the capture of Beaufort, in the same State, and our operations in this department, where they retire as we advance, must satisfy them that we are not all cowards and boys. And I venture to say that the results of the next thirty days in this department will not strengthen their old opinions of us.

Charleston is reported as being surrounded by two lines of intrenchments, one of which is within two miles, and the other about five miles from town. They are of immense size, well constructed, and requiring a large force to defend them. Very few guns have been mounted upon the works as yet; but the recent startling intelligence has set them to work again, and they are daily mounting guns.

About six hundred men garrison Fort Sumter, and it is well prepared for a siege. That is about all the news the contrabands bring, except that they report provisions very scarce and high, in consequence of the number of soldiers in the town, and the great difficulty in getting supplies from the back country.

Affairs at Beaufort remain unchanged. The missionaries sent out by the National (?) Freedman's Society, are still in the village, enjoying themselves hugely. Some of them have settled down on plantations on the island and on Ladies' Island, where they are developing the resources of the soil and instilling into the contrabands' mind valuable lessons on the universal brotherhood of man and the like.

As I have not visited any of the plantations of these agriculturists, I am unable to report to the friends of the cause the results of their labors so far.

It is the general opinion of those competent to form a correct judgment, that a vast majority of the men brought out by Mr. Pierce are perfectly incompetent for the positions they have assumed, and that their career, which will be brief, will be marked by ignominous failure.

Mr. Pierce, I understand, has a dim perception of how the affair will turn out, and I learn that he proposes to resign his position and return North in a month or six weeks, or as soon as a successor relieves him. He has already gained all the reputation that he can reasonably hope for, and it is a shrewd idea to retire before disappointment and failure have wilted the green wreath about his brow, and changed it to a sallow hue. The great experiment, as he projected it, is a foregone failure, and all that remains is to pay the laborers in the vineyard their hire, and safely transport them to their more congenial retreats in retail grocery and dry goods stores North. Private enterprise may work these plantations successfully with contraband labor, directed by intelligence and experience; but a different class of men must be sent here, and under different auspices than those now wildly wandering in a maze of ignorance and false ideas.

In the first place, the assurances made the contrabands by the missionaries, that they are their brothers and equals, not obliged to render service if they choose otherwise, and free to act their own pleasure in all things, have inspired the ignorant blacks with the idea that they are perfectly free. Freedom, as they understand it, means indolence and inactivity. They have no higher idea of its true meaning, and consequently they believe they are hereafter to enjoy a continued holiday; and when they are asked to work they refuse in many instances, and inquire if they are not free? And you can't explain the matter to them, as they are incapable of understanding it. That is one reason why the experiment under the present plan will fail; the other is equally as cogent. The superintendents of the plantations are not fitted for the position. Not one in ten knows anything about farming; nearly all are ignorant of the use of tools and implements, and hardly know a plough from a seed planter. Their lives have been spent in other and foreign avocations, and to look for success in a movement guided and controlled by such men is as futile as attempting to extract sunbeams from a cucumber. The results will bear me out in what I have written.

The missionaries attached to the educational branch of the movement are doing as well as could be expected. They are mostly in Beaufort, quartered together in a large house in town, and engaged in the pursuit of abandoned furniture, with which they are fitting up their mansion in regal affluence. They are quite successful in this line of business, and their career promises to be glorious. Rev. Mr. French is a famous forager in the furniture line, and his reputation is firmly established. He may be seen at all hours of the day, mounted on one of the Quartermaster's horses, gaily capering about the village, while Mrs. French and some of the leading ladies are enjoying themselves hugely in riding about in a barouche, drawn by two of the Quartermaster's horses. Their advent on the shell road is the signal for a good deal of pleasant excitement among the soldiers and civilians. I understand that a school is in operation already, in which "boys" and women are taught to read and spell. I believe that the teachers find some stupidity among the contrabands, and that it is not the easiest matter to teach them the alphabet but with patience they may succeed in due time.

Several ladies and gentlemen joined the party last Sunday. They came on the Oriental, and belong to the same type of strong minded or sentimental women and weak minded and theoretical men.

I am pained to be obliged to announce that the missionary circles are still disturbed by the old troubles. After long and able discussions, the relative superiority of the ladies from Boston and New York has not been decided. There is a great deal of hard talk between the respective cliques, and some little feeling has been manifested by both sides. As the contest progresses the combatants grow warmer and warmer in expressing their opinions of the other, and the dissension promises to rend the band in twain, break up the party and so disgust both sides that all will go home. You see, the Boston people having brought their double refined Boston ideas with them, cannot possibly see how some of the New York ladies who have been respectable milliners and dressmakers in Canal street—as they assert—can be fitted for the grave and important duties of teaching the contraband to read and write, and believing, as they do, that only in the modern Athens can one acquire those peculiar qualities of mind and habit necessary to the successful prosecution of a teacher's duties among the contrabands, they cannot credit the report that the New York ladies can be so insane or presumptuous as to dare attempt anything in that line. Hence the row. One thing may be said in favor of the missionaries from Gotham. They come without receiving a cent of pay from any society, while the Boston ladies receive a stated salary, liberal and certain. And I am sure the ladies from New York, although they are a little on the sentimental order, are fully as well prepared for the work as those from the Orient. Still, Boston rules the roast. In spite of the able and chivalric defence and assistance of Rev. Mr. French, I am fearful that the East will win the day, and drive off their co-laborers from Gotham. Mr. French will not go, though; he has what the soldiers term a "good thing," and is not quite ready to relinquish it.

I am anxious to see Mr. French's report, which has undoubtedly been sent on to the North. He has prepared one of some length, and at the supper table, at the headquarters, did he read it to a large circle of the brothers and sisters, who were intensely gratified at its tone, the delicate manner in which it complimented them all, not forgetting Mr. or Mrs. F., and at the astonishing success which the missionaries had met with since their arrival, which had been but dimly realized before the report was written.

I intend to keep the public informed of their movements, and shall fairly and justly attach credit or blame where it belongs. If Mr. French errs in his reports I shall endeavor to rectify the error, for which he will be very grateful, undoubtedly, but I don't do it for that reason. "No, Judge, I am above it."

Smallpox prevails to an alarming extent among the negroes in Beaufort and on the island. There are now twenty-five cases in the small pox hospital, under the care of Dr. Waldock, of Boston, Mass., who came out with Mr. Pierce. He is an able physician, and very successful in cases of that loathsome disease. Having made a specialty in this practice, to a certain extent, he brings a large experience and a thorough knowledge of its character and the proper mode of treatment. He has lost but few cases. He is now engaged in vaccinating the negroes, and has already treated betwen five hundred and fifty and six hundred men, women and children. Besides small pox, the negroes are afflicted with fevers to a greater extent than usual. Quite a number have died, and the sick lists are increasing. The physicians attribute this great increase of sickness and mortality among the blacks to the change in the kind, quality and quantity of their food. A glance at their regimen while under their masters and at work, and the present, under quartermasters' care, will satisfy every one that the present system is radically wrong, and will result in killing all the contrabands, if continued. The allowance to field hands, when working, on the plantations South is one peck of corn (unground) and three pounds of meat—either pork, beef or bacon—per week. The meat was not given to those not working. The negroes were then fat and healthy, and suffered comparatively little from disease.

When Captain Lilley took charge of the contrabands at Beaufort he allowed them the following articles, and in the quantity specified:—Fifty pounds of beef or pork, five pounds of coffee, twenty pounds of rice, eight quarts of beans, three quarts of molasses, and Indian meal *ad libitum* to the one hundred rations. Six children were entitled to one ration. Rice and beans were issued alternately. Under that system the negroes lived better that ever before—had enough to eat, and were healthy and willing to work. Capt. Lilley had 556 negroes under his charge, and during the two months he controlled them but five died, four of whom were children and the fifth an old man who had passed his eighty-first year. That was the result of his system.

On the 20th of January Capt. Fuller took charge of the contrabands, and began to issue full soldiers' rations to each and every one, counting children, and the consequence is the bills of mortality have increased to an alarming extent, and the negroes are rapidly becoming worthless and unable or indisposed to work. A soldier's ration is one pound and a quarter of beef or pork, eighteen ounces of bread, rice, beans, sugar, molasses, soap, candles, pepper, vinegar, salt, &c., in proportion, valued in the aggregate at forty cents per day, or for five hundred and fifty-six men, women and children, $222 40 per day, for rations alone. Capt. Lilley's rations may be valued at $45 per day, or perhaps less. Now, in the first place, there is not a soldier in the army that can or does eat his ration daily. No man can eat twelve hard buscuits a day, besides his pound and a half of pork or beef, his potatoes, &c., furnished him. Nor can the negro do it with safety. Nevertheless he is glutton enough to eat all his pork and beef daily, and is killing himself as rapidly as possible. It is a continual thanksgiving feast with him, and he will fail to endure it just as a white would who eat his Christmas or Thanksgiving feast every day. There is a limit to human endurance, and the contrabands are finding it out very rapidly. Laying aside the more important humanitarian aspect of the question, the frightful expenditure incurred in feeding the negroes in this sumptuous and unusual manner, should be taken into consideration. The United States government is feeding at least twenty-five thousand negroes daily, at a cost of about ten thousand dollars per day, and at the expense of the negroe's health and comfort as well. Now, with the regimen furnished by Captain Lilley, which is much better than the negro has ever before enjoyed, and which costs about eight or nine cents per day to each, the same number of men might be fed for $2,250 per day, saving the government each and every day the comfortable sum of $7,750—an item of considerable magnitude. I don't propose to enter into a lengthy discussion of the subject, but merely refer to it in order to suggest that it might occupy the time of some of the intelligent gentlemen among the missionaries very profitably to themselves and to the public. And if they will only investigate the subject in a thorough manner, and make a report, they will be of some real service to the contrabands if they can suggest a bill of fare for the negroes which will be cheap and nutritious. I call upon them, or the Commander-in-Chief of the department, to investigate this subject. It needs it much.

Another matter might be investigated by the authorities at Beaufort. What parties are authorized to put into circulation one dollar notes issued by the Atlantic Bank, of Boston, Massachusetts. I had occasion yesterday to make a small purchase of Chauncey Robbins & Co., Beaufort, and received as change for a ten dollar Treasury note a five dollar Treasury note and four one dollar bills of the Atlantic Bank, Boston, with some specie. I am informed that this firm is putting out these notes in large quantities, which go into the hands of soldiers and negroes, who cannot use them unless they are given in trade again to Robbins.

Some of the notes are endorsed as follows:—"Received of Chauncey Robbins, who receives two and a half per cent from the bank for putting them into circulation," or words to that effect. The notes, of course, will never return to the bank when once in negro hands after our forces have left the island, and the bank will be the gainer thereby. If that is the object of this issuance of notes by Robbins it is too sharp practice to be long allowed; and if the bank is a party to the transaction it is equally guilty in attempting to swindle the poor contrabands. I have heard of negroes selling one dollar notes on the Atlantic Bank for fifty cents, as they look at them in the light of shinplasters. General Stevens ought to put a stop to the further circulation or issuance of notes by the above firm at once, and thereby protect the soldier and contraband. Another question: Has any government officer who is interested in a banking institution anything to do with the circulation of the above notes, directly or indirectly? I dislike to refer publicly to such acts, but I know of no other way of calling attention to them.

The frigate Wabash, bearing the blue flag of Commodore S. F. Dupont, came into port to-night from the South, accompanied by the Seminole, Commander Gillis, and the pilot boat Blunt.

A new pontoon train of novel construction has arrived here, and is now in Beaufort, where a series of experiments will be made to test the value of the train. The train has been placed in charge of Company H, Volunteer Engineers, Captain Cruso. The officers of the company are—Captain, —— Cruso; First Lieutenant, F. P. Butt; Second Lieutenant, J. S. Baldwin. I will endeavor to be present at the trial and report results.

HILTON HEAD, March 28, 1862.

The Contrabands at Hilton Head—Escape of Five Negroes from Charleston—Their Statements, &c.

To-day, in company with Lieutenant Van Brunt, of the Provost Marshal's department, I took a look through the negro quarters. The buildings are quite extensive, and are kept in admirable order. The contrabands appear to enjoy the change from hard masters to comparative luxury and indolence.

I found among them five contrabands who escaped from Charleston on the night of the 25th, arriving here yesterday. They came out in a primitive looking dug-out, passing under the guns of forts Sumter, Moultrie and Castle Pinckney without molestation, arriving on board the steamer Florida, which is doing blockading duty at this point, from whence they were transported to this place.

From one of the negroes, who appeared to be of greater intelligence than is usually found among this class of humanity, I learned that there are at present some six hundred men in garrison at Fort Sumter, under command of Captain Calhoun, of Virginia, Captain Rhett and Major Wayne. Among the names of some of the other officers the negroes knew were Lieutenant Henry Sutton, Lieutenant Tompkins, Lieutenant Battol, &c. At Moultrie there were three hundred men, and at Castle Pinckney there was one company of eighty men, under command of Captain Eats, formerly of the United States Army. The negro I got the greatest part of my information from was named Thomas Barnwell, and he formerly belonged to Charles Scanlin, of the Ordnance Department. He was in this place at the bombardment, and gives a graphic description of the running away of the rebels. He tells me that Charleston is well intrenched in the rear, the rebels anticipating an attack from the main land, and that there are some thirty thousand troops in and around the city. Negroes, however, have but little knowledge of numbers, and their stories should be taken with grains of allowance. Nevertheless, I think from the conversation I had with "Tom," and his general intelligence, that he is pretty correct. He gives some other information that it will not do for me to make public; but suffice it to say that the chivalry of South Carolina are evidently in a bad way, and are not acting as harmoniously as they did a year ago. The reverses they have received of late have greatly dampened their ardor and enthusiasm.

"Tom" heard his master and others talking of the Newbern affair, and says there were some thousands of rebels killed there. Vessels continue to run the blockade at Charleston, a steamer from England, with arms and ammunition, arriving there on the 10th.

Escape of Two Rebel Deserters from Fort Pulaski.

OUR PORT ROYAL CORRESPONDENCE.

PORT ROYAL, March 25, 1862.

Their Statements—Strength of Fort Pulaski—How It is Provisioned—A Savannah Infernal Machine—General Hunter Expected, &c., &c.

A couple of deserters escaped from Fort Pulaski on the 19th inst., and reported themselves to our forces on Jones' Island, in the Savannah river, about four miles above the fort.

They report that, being considered perfectly sound on the secesh question, they obtained permission to go fishing. They got into the boat and pulled a short distance from the fort, and then put their oars in the boat and commenced fishing, the tide at that time running flood up the river. They allowed the boat to drift quietly up with the tide until they got, as they thought, far enough from the fort to enable them to make their escape before they were discovered and fired at, when they seized their oars and pulled for liberty. Brown and Cleeman are the names of the two men. They are both Germans.

They report Colonel Olmstead as commander of the fort. The garrison consists of three hundred and sixty-eight persons, all told. There is a German company and an Irish company, whose term of service or enlistment expired in January. They are very anxious to be discharged and allowed to go home, but they are kept there by force, consequently are much disaffected; in fact, they give it as their opinion that there are not fifty men in the fort that are really loyal at heart for the rebel cause. The fort contains provisions and water for six months. Their communication with Savannah is effectually cut off.

They give the following as the calibre of the fort, viz:—Four ten-inch columbiads, four twelve-inch mortars, two on the ramparts and two on the ground in front of the fort, two rifled twelve-pounders, and one rifled eight-pounder, the balance of the guns are thirty-twos and forty-twos. Total number of guns fifty-seven.

The magazine of the fort contains fifty thousand pounds of powder, besides sixty rounds for each gun.

They report that among the cargo brought by the Fingal—that succeeded in running the blockade some months since—was five hundred and sixty infernal machines, for destroying vessels. This is a specimen of the friendly feeling of England for the United States. Let our people remember this.

Fearing that you had not been informed about the amphibious machine building at Savannah for the purpose of raising the blockade, I will say a few words about it.

We learned by a deserter who came in from Savannah a few days ago, that a machine, or submerged vessel, to be propelled by two men, was nearly ready at Savannah, by which infernal machines were to be screwed to the bottoms of ships for their destruction; but the inventor was killed, or rather drowned, while experimenting with it.

There is nothing of particular interest here to write about. The news that General Hunter is coming here to take command appears to give general satisfaction. The ditch-digging propensity of the present commanding general, instead of making good soldiers out of his men by proper drilling and training, has been anything but agreeable or useful.

The idea of immense fortifications to guard against a land attack by the rebels on an island like this, when the rebels have not the means of reaching it, particularly while so many of Com. Dupont's gunboats are about here, exhibits a prudence and caution that I could never have realized had I not seen it with my own eyes. We all say welcome, General Hunter.

I saw an officer of the Kensington on shore to-day, and from what he says about the condition of their engine and rudder arrangements, together with the fact that she had not coal enough to reach Ship Island, (her destination,) it is evident some one in the Boston Navy Yard is very much to blame for neglect of duty, and the Navy Department should inquire into it. She is now detained here for coal; and, from what I can learn, the blockade will soon be raised for want of that very necessary article.

The steamer Sachem arrived here to-day, bound South; also the storeship Release.

On the night of the 21st inst. a seaman of the Susquehanna, named George W. Collins, of Kent county, Delaware, was shot while on picket duty on Jones' Island, by one of General Viele's pickets, supposing him to be a rebel. Carelessness on the part of some of the officers, in not passing the word along the line, is the cause of the accident.

MARCH, 26, 1862.

Arrival of the Crew of the Emily St. Pierre—Escaped Contrabands—The Rebel Troops, &c

I have just had a chat with an officer of the Flambeau, and learned she is just from Charleston, having on board the crew of the ship Emily St. Pierre, captured off Charleston a few days since by the Augusta. She is from Calcutta, and loaded with sacking, or bagging, for cotton bales. Her papers, and other circumstances connected with her, will make it very easy for the courts to condemn her.

The Flambeau has on board several contrabands that escaped from Charleston yesterday, one of which is a young woman. They give the following information, viz:—That on the 10th inst. the iron steamer Commerce, from England, succeeded in running the blockade, and arrived in Charleston. Her cargo consisted of blankets, shoes, boots, cloths and munitions of war. On the 19th some other vessel, whose name I forget, arrived at Charleston from the West Indies. On the 23d the steamer Cahawba, from England, also a pilot boat, from Nassau, arrived, and they are locking daily for the arrival of the Bermuda. All these vessels are loading with cotton; also the ship Mackinaw and a bark. The two latter are ready, with their topgallant yards across, and will pop out some dark or stormy night and go on their way rejoicing. It strikes me, from what I can learn from navy officers that I have talked with on the subject, that our steamers lay too far off from the entrance to the various channels, and that upon the slightest appearance of a little wind they fancy a severe gale is coming on, and they put to sea and get too far off. Therefore, the rascals have a chance to get out and leave.

They are endeavoring to build an iron-plated steamer in Charleston. Concerts, fairs and various other means, besides begging even of the slaves to raise money to enable them to accomplish the work, are being resorted to. They say then they can raise the blockade; but there need be no fears of that, as the only ship the rebels have is the Merrimac which can contend successfully with wooden navy built steamers, nor can they build any within the next twelve months.

The rebel papers say that twelve men were killed on the Merrimac, and that she was sent back in a sinking condition. There is a large force at Georgetown, they fearing an attack from that quarter; also troops between Savannah and Charleston, on the line of the railroad.

Charleston has two lines of intrenchments around it, between the Ashley and Cooper rivers—one five miles out, the other two miles from the city. James Island has a large force on it with considerable earthworks. The only armed vessels in Charleston consist of two small steamtugs. Two companies of North Carolina troops arrived in Charleston the other day, and, being hungry, made for the bakers' shops. They presented North Carolina shinplasters which would not be received. The soldiers kept the bread, and a row was the consequence. The next day the troops were sent back to their own State.

Provisions are frightfully high priced. Tea four dollars a pound, coffee three dollars, matches one cent apiece, and other things in proportion.

The people are all ready to leave the city in case of an attack; and some even go so far as to say, that if it was not for being laughed at, they would be willing to give up the city, or, in other words, lay down their arms. A fight took place in Fort Moultrie between two officers, growing out of a difference of opinion as to whether the Hessians could take Charleston or not. One said it could not be done, while the other asserted that before long we would have Charleston and Savannah both.

The bark Hazeltine arrived here yesterday, with government stores, from Boston.

Deaths in General Sherman's Corps.

The following is an official list of deaths in this command since the departure of this expeditionary corps from Annapolis, Md:—

THIRD NEW HAMPSHIRE VOLUNTEERS.

Niles Amasa, private, Co. G, Hilton Head, S. C., Nov. 9, 1861, congestive fever.
Barteles Jacob, private, Co. H, Nov