NEW YORK HERALD.

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EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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AMUSEMENTS THIS EVENING.

BIBLO'S GARDEN, Broadway.—MAGIC JOKE—FAIRY CIRCUS.

WALLACK'S THEATRE, Broadway.—LOVE CHASE.

WINTER GARDEN, Broadway.—TICKET OF LEAVE MAN.

OLYMPIC THEATRE, Broadway.—LADIES BEWARE—EASY SHAVING—YANKEE LEGACY.

NEW BOWERY THEATRE, Bowery—DOG OF OLD STONE CROSS—PAUL CLIFFORD—TIGER OF THE SEA.

BOWERY THEATRE, Bowery.—JACK SHEPPARD—ANCESTRESS—FALSE COLORS.

BARNUM'S MUSEUM, Broadway.—ARABIAN GIANT, GIANT GIRL, GIANT BOY, LILLIPUTIAN KING, &c., at all hours. TICKET OF LEAVE MAN—TENANT OF THE TOMB.—Afternoon and Evening.

BRYANTS' MINSTRELS, Mechanics' Hall, 472 Broadway.—ETHIOPIAN SONGS, DANCES, BURLESQUES, &c.—JEEMES THE PORT.

WOOD'S MINSTREL HALL, 514 Broadway.—ETHIOPIAN SONGS, DANCES, &c.—VON HAM-BUGS MENAGERIE.

GEO. CHRISTY'S MINSTRELS, 585 Broadway.—BURLESQUES, SONGS, DANCES, &c.—BLACK STATUE.

AMERICAN THEATRE, No. 444 Broadway.—BALLETS, PANTOMIMES, BURLESQUES, &c.—IRISH TIGER.

BROADWAY AMPHITHEATRE, 485 Broadway.—GYMNASTIC AND EQUESTRIAN PERFORMANCES.

NEW YORK MUSEUM OF ANATOMY, 618 Broadway.—CURIOSITIES AND LECTURES, from 9 A. M. till 10 P. M.

HOOLEY'S OPERA HOUSE, Brooklyn.—ETHIOPIAN SONGS, DANCES, BURLESQUES, &c.

New York, Thursday, December 17, 1863.

THE SITUATION.

The cavalry pickets of the Potomac army occupy Culpepper, and extend some miles beyond it. There is no change in the main body of the army. It was intensely cold, with some snow yesterday. The Russian officers visited the army and witnessed a review of the Sixth corps.

The troops in Western Virginia had some skirmishing with the rebels lately in the vicinity of Strasburg. On Monday last Colonel Wells took thirty prisoners belonging to General Ewell's corps.

Major General Buford, one of the most brilliant cavalry officers of the Army of the Potomac, died yesterday in Washington from sickness contracted during the late campaign. His loss is deeply regretted.

The Southern news from Charleston up to Tuesday is telegraphed to the Richmond papers and is most interesting. Fort Sumter took fire on the 11th instant, from some unknown cause, and ten rebels were killed and thirty wounded. Heavy cannonading was kept up from our land batteries during the conflagration. No firing on the fort appears to have taken place on the three following days; but on the 12th, 14th and 15th several shells, filled with Greek fire, were thrown into Charleston, without doing much damage. Thirteen Union prisoners, including, it is said, "the commissioned officers of the brig Perry, captured at Merrill's Inlet," have arrived in Charleston. This is the first account we have of the capture of the United States brig Perry. It may be that she was driven ashore in the late gale.

The troops of General Longstreet made an attempt to cut off and capture General Shackelford's command—who were in pursuit of them—at Bear Station, on the Cumberland and Morristown Railroad, on Monday. A heavy force of the rebel cavalry moved down the left bank of the Holston river, intending to cross at Kelly's Ford and take our forces in the rear. This attempt, however, was checked by Gen. Ferrero, who sent the brigade of Gen. Humphreys to hold the ford. The rebels fired across the river with artillery upon the brigade, but with little effect. Gen. Shackelford formed a line of battle at Bear Station, and after fighting the enemy until nightfall was driven back half a mile. It is evident the rebels were concentrating all their forces in that section upon Longstreet's command. Generals Vance, Ransom and Vaughn had joined him before the conflict with General Shackleford.

The Richmond *Whig* of yesterday says, in an editorial, that the rebel cavalry advanced on the 10th above Ringgold, finding the country clear of our troops. They proceeded thence to Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge, where they found nothing but the debris of the Union camp, the position seeming to have been deserted on Saturday last. In the town of Chattanooga and below the force had visibly decreased. The presumption was that a heavy column had gone after Longstreet, and an expedition had gone into West Tennessee to look after Forrest, who has taken advantage of the absence of Sherman's corps.

We publish some interesting news concerning the Texas expedition and the state of affairs in New Orleans, which arrived by the steamer Thomas A. Scott.

CONGRESS.

The Senate transacted but little business yesterday. The joint resolution of thanks to General Grant and his army was adopted. A bill equalizing the grade of line officers of the navy was introduced and referred. The bill to facilitate the settlement of deceased soldiers' accounts was reported from the Military Committee. Mr. Sumner's resolution relative to codifying the public statutes was agreed to.

In the House quite a number of interesting matters were brought up, as will be seen by the report of the proceedings. Mr. Rollin's, of Missouri, offered a resolution somewhat like the Crittenden compromise proposition, which was laid over for debate. A resolution declaratory of the true intent and meaning of the law authorizing a suspension of the writ of habeas corpus was referred to the Judiciary Committee.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS.

The steamship Champion arrived at this port yesterday evening with the mails from California, $1,380,973 in specie, consigned to New York and England; news from Granada, dated at Panama and Aspinwall on the 7th instant, with late and very interesting advices from Central America and the South Pacific Coast.

The mixed commission established by the Convention of the 12th of January last between the governments of Peru and the United States, closed its sessions in Lima on the 27th of November. The Hon. J. S. Mackie, one of the commissioners, has returned in the Champion. The commission heard and resolved nineteen claims of American citizens against Peru, and four claims of the Peruvians against the United States. The conduct of the American commissioner, is eulogized by the journals of Lima.

General Barrios, of San Salvador, with his wife and secretary, had arrived in Aspinwall, on board the British frigate Sutlej, from La Union. His escape—which closes for the moment the bloody drama in Salvador—from the troops of Carrera and the hostile officials of Honduras and Nicaragua, was effected in a very remarkable and somewhat romantic manner, after he had endured sufferings and privations of the most painful description. The drooping ex-ruler was taken to a brilliant ball given by Mrs. Livingstone, wife of the American Consul in La Union, to an elegant party made up of natives and the officers of the United States steamer Saginaw and the British frigate Sutlej. Leaving the ball room he assumed the uniform of a master of the United States Navy, walked with his gallant allied friends to the landing place, and put off to the Saginaw and Sutlej, after passing the officers of his mortal enemy in the street. The Sutlej landed General Barrios at Aspinwall, from which port he, with his companions, are to sail for New York.

General Mosquera was temporarily absent from Bogota. The country was quiet.

Troops were rapidly concentrating on the frontier of Ecuador. Flores, it was thought, would soon assume the offensive.

The British West India mail steamer Saladin, from Kingston, Jamaica, and Port au Prince, Hayti, arrived at this port yesterday morning. The news from Jamaica is interesting. A great deal of sickness prevails in the island, which has been visited by an appalling earthquake. Business is very dull. The Rev. N. Lechmere Ellis, of the Church of England, and late of South Brooklyn, had arrived in safety. The Bishop of Delaware is on a visit to Kingston. By the invitation of the Rev. F. S. Bradshaw, rector of St. Michael's Episcopal church, the American Bishop preached several times before large congregations. The people have taken a great fancy to him, and speak very highly of his merits as a preacher of the Gospel. In reference to commercial affairs, the *Mercantile Intelligencer* of the 5th inst. says:—"Since our issue of the 24th ult., for the English mail, trade, which we then reported dull, in consequence of very heavy rains all over the island, has somewhat revived; but beyond a rise in sugar, caused by the advance in England, and a rise in corn meal, owing to the small stock on hand, there is absolutely nothing of importance to which we can call particular attention."

The news from Hayti is of interest, although our papers contain nothing later from the Dominican part of the island, if we except an appeal to the people to forget all former differences, and to band together for the common defence. The President of Hayti had given a very flattering reception to Bishop Lee, of the Episcopal Church, and the Reverends Charles H. Williamson and J. J. Holly. Protestant worship having been established in the island, and a church erected, the missionaries waited on the President to thank him for facilities. In his reply he said that freedom of worship was a basis of the Haytien constitution. Nothing new in commercial circles. Provisions are plentiful. Coffee was at $136 (Haytien) with fair sales; cocoa at $79.

Our advices from La Guaira, Venezuela, are to the 1st inst. The country is reported tranquil, and produce coming from the interior to market in great abundance. Mr. Wampool, United States Consul, died at Porto Cabello on the 27th ult., much and deservedly regretted by his friends and acquaintances.

By the arrival of the British brig Ada Purvis, Captain Smith, from Minatitlan November 19, we are informed that the town of Minatitlan was closely besieged by French guerillas. All supplies from the interior were cut off, and the people suffering for want of provisions. Guarding the town were a French gunboat and a few black Egyptian troops. The Mexicans seemed very desirous of throwing off the French yoke—"military despotism"—and they expect, when our war is over, aid from the United States to drive out the French.

The Board of Aldermen met yesterday at one o'clock. A resolution by Alderman Mitchell, appropriating thirty-three thousand five hundred dollars for the purchase of Clark Mills' colossal statue of Andrew Jackson, was laid over. A communication was received from City Inspector Boole, stating that the appropriation for street cleaning is entirely exhausted, and that he is now cleaning the streets under the authority of a resolution adopted by the Board of Health. Mr. Boole suggests that a sufficient sum of money for keeping the streets clean be at once raised by the issue of bonds. The communication was referred to the Committee on Finance, and the Board adjourned to meet again to-day at one o'clock.

The ship Vancover, Capt. Curtis, of Bath, Maine, which arrived at this port last evenidg, from Bristol, England, reports that on the 12th inst., in latitude 40 30, longitude 69, she was chased by a three-masted steamer (propeller.) The steamer had foretopsail, topgallantsail and a large square sail set on the foremast, and fore and aft sails on the other masts. She was painted black, and had a house on deck. She was under sail only and was about four miles distant from the Vancouver.

In the Board of Education yesterday, a resolution, offered by Commissioner Hitchman, to have the official proceedings of that Board published in the NEW YORK HERALD, as that paper has a larger circulation than any other in the city, was referred to the Finance Committee.

The usual fortnightly meeting of the Emigration Commissioners took place yesterday. From the report of Mr. Casserly, the Secretary of the Board, it appears that 4,175 emigrants landed last week, which makes the total number of arrivals since January 1, 151,820, against 71,353 during the corresponding period of 1862. The balance of the commutation fund now in bank is $24,955.

The stock market was buoyant again yesterday, and prices had an upward tendency, with large sales. There was more business doing at the gold exchange, but prices did not vary materially from those obtained on the previous day. Government securities are without alteration, prices being well maintained, although the sales were limited. Money remains easy, and after the banks receive the two years interest bearing notes, a large amount of greenbacks will be let loose upon the market, and the rate of interest will probably drop.

The state of affairs in business places was not materially changed. Nearly all the merchants report a very dull market, and the amount of commercial transactions was small. At the Produce Exchange flour and wheat were a shade easier, while corn was active and a trifle higher. Provisions were quiet, and prices were without change. Groceries were very quiet, and the business small. Petroleum was dull, but unchanged. Imported merchandise was quiet, but steady, almost without exception. Freights were firm, with a moderate business, chiefly to Great Britain.

THE NIGGER IN CONGRESS.—It is edifying to witness the excitement which has been raised thus early in the session on the subject of the nigger. From the heat and passion exhibited it would seem as if the destinies of the country were inseparably bound up with him. What is the use of debating the point whether he can fight? Let him fight. Why make an issue about his being paid? If he can fight he has a right to be paid. All such controversies are waste of time. They belong to the past. The only question that now remains is as to how the country is to be restored to the prosperous condition in which it stood previous to the rebellion. This is what is at present occupying the minds of the people, and they will solve it by the election to the Executive chair of General Grant, a man whose common sense and patriotism raise him above all fanatical or party considerations.

The Coming Revolution—General Grant for Our Next President.

The approaching Presidential election will mark a new epoch in the history of this country. The public disappointment resulting from the incompetency of the present administration, the necessities thus arising for a new and a strong man of the Napoleonic type at the head of the government, the dissolution of the political parties of 1860, and all the signs of the times, indicate a great and far-reaching political revolution in 1864.

Nor do we think that in proposing General Grant as the man for the crisis we are mistaken as to the drift of public opinion. Of all our living heroes he stands before the country to-day the most successful, the most acceptable to the people, and as best entitled to the highest recognition of their confidence and their gratitude. We accept him, therefore, as the coming man. We are strongly supported in this conclusion by President Lincoln, who, it is said, after himself, has declared General Grant his first choice for the succession; and because the man who has so thoroughly tanned the rebels so far is the man to tan them into submission, and all the disturbing political factions of the day.

Let the people bring forward and elect General Grant, and they will have a President, to begin with, free from any entangling alliances with the scheming party managers and trading spoilsmen of the country. We shall have an independent President, with the will and the ability to bring the war to a speedy conclusion, and to re-establish the Union upon a solid foundation. In placing him at the head of affairs we may expect, too, from the straightforward, practical and decisive character of General Grant, such measures in the way of retrenchment and reform as will lighten the burdens of the people, while securing the public credit, the public finances, the currency and all the business interests of the country against the dangers of a general revulsion. These considerations, in view of a national debt of two thousand millions of dollars in 1865, will operate hardly less than his military achievements in behalf of General Grant, as the popular leader under whom we may confidently move for a new and improved order of things at Washington.

But it is not alone in reference to our domestic affairs that such a man as General Grant for our next President is eminently desirable. We shall want just such a man to bring about a prompt and satisfactory settlement of certain important matters connected with our foreign relations. We allude particularly to certain outstanding balances, resulting from this war, against England and France. Our commerce on the Atlantic Ocean has suffered from the depredations of Anglo-rebel piratical cruisers to the extent of twenty millions of dollars. A requisition upon England for indemnity to this amount from Gen. Grant, as President of the re-United States, would, upon a six weeks' notice, result in the payment of the bill. England would understand this requisition from Grant to mean the production of the money or the loss of the Canadas and the adjoining provinces, and the dislodgment of all those rebel traders who might still be flourishing at Nassau. A hundred thousand veteran volunteers, upon a very short notice, would be ready at the call of President Grant to repay the hospitalities of the Blue Noses of Halifax, or to try if the walls of Quebec are stronger than the walls of Sumter.

The next international duty devolving upon the administration will be the reaffirmation and enforcement of the Monroe doctrine in Mexico. This duty will require a friendly notice of say three months' grace to Louis Napoleon to remove his empire, emperor, Council of Notables, army, camp followers and baggage wagons from the soil of Mexico, and his blockading ships from the waters thereof, on pain of their forcible expulsion by a liberating American army of one hundred thousand men and a corresponding fleet of iron-clads. That this friendly notice from General Grant, as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, fully reinstated, would result in the quiet evacuation of Mexico by Louis Napoleon, we cannot doubt, inasmuch as there would be no refuge for his army in that country half as strong as Vicksburg.

We conclude, therefore, that in order to demolish the corrupt political parties of the country, to secure an independent administration at Washington, under a chief tried and approved as the man to meet the exigencies of the crisis, and in order to secure a prompt, complete and conclusive settlement of our domestic disturbances and foreign grievances, General Grant is the man of the people for our next President. Let him be brought forward as the people's candidate, and the people will triumphantly elect him.

GOLD SPECULATION.—Senator Jim Lane has distinguished himself by many extraordinary legislative flights; but the measure he has just introduced to put down speculation in gold is the most remarkable that he has as yet attempted. No man whose brains are not all wool, and curled wool at that, can fail to see that gold is like every other article of merchandise, and that no measure that can be devised can exclude it from the operation of the natural laws that govern trade. Were the prohibitory penalties sought to be inflicted of Draconian severity they would no more effect the object aimed at than will the easily evaded provisions of this bill. We would recommend Senator Lane to stick to what he understands. People may listen to him on the subject of the nigger—knowing his intimate acquaintance with it—in all its odoriferous phases; but they have no respect for his opinion in financial or commercial matters. If, instead of dabbling with things entirely beyond his capacity, he were to raise the colored brigade he has been so long promising the government, and assist the great tanner to tan the hides of the rebels, he would be doing the country some practical service, and raising himself a peg or two in its estimation.

DEMOCRACY OF THE PRESS.—It is really pitiable to see the *Tribune*, *Times*, *World* and other leading journals of this city wasting time, space, ink and paper in twaddling over Halleck's report, and the irrepressible negro and Jeff. Davis' last message, and other stale topics, when the great, the absorbing, the comprehensive, the important question, "Who shall be the next President?" is now open for discussion and is engrossing all truly patriotic minds. Everything is included in this grand question. War, peace, reconstruction, the finances, all hang upon the central idea of the next Presidency; for the next President will decide upon them all as soon as we decide upon the next President. Let the other journals stop twiddling their thumbs about nothing, and come out boldly for General Grant.

GENERAL MCCLELLAN'S REPORT.—The House of Representatives, on motion of Mr. Cox, has adopted a resolution calling for the "Report made by Major General George B. McClellan, concerning the organization and operations of the Army of the Potomac, while under his command, and of all army operations while he was General-in-Chief." This is right, as that report must contain a vast amount of information calculated to enlighten the people wonderfully upon the wisdom of their rulers, and right also as a measure of simple justice to a gallant soldier. General McClellan's report, when made public, will exhibit to the fullest extent the incapacity, injustice and vindictiveness of the radical politicians at Washington, in and out of the War Department, who now make a triumph of the obscurity into which they have driven the senior officer of the United States Army. McClellan's career at the commencement of this war was one full of promise. He had been the fellow soldier in Mexico of such men as Grant, with whom he had attained equal distinction in that war. He gave us our first victory in this war, and he organized the army that has fought our hardest battles. Had he been dealt honestly by in the command of that army it would have achieved ere this all that its most sanguine friends could have desired from it, and would have had to-day the most brilliant history of any army that ever received the fiery baptism of battle. But, thwarted at every step by the jealousies and contemptible fears of the politicians, with Mr. Lincoln at their head, every opportunity was lost, and doubtless the report will tell us exactly how. Let us have it at once then.

From the blighting influence that has crushed the honorable aspirations of McClellan and of Rosecrans General Grant is safe. He has risen to a distinction that they cannot reach to, and holds a position in the popular mind that they cannot shake; otherwise he would but add one more to the many victims of this radical Juggernaut. And he doubtless understands this so well that we may expect from him, as one of the earliest acts of his Presidential career, the restoration of McClellan and Rosecrans to their proper positions and honors in the army.

THE FIFTY-NINE BLOCKHEADS IN CONGRESS.—Fernando Wood persuaded fifty-eight other blockheads, whom he calls democrats, to vote with him in favor of opening peace negotiations with the rebel government. To negotiate with that government is to recognize the confederacy, and will authorize all foreign nations to recognize it. Negotiation is therefore the simplest and easiest way to accomplish disunion. Offering such silly peace resolutions is also the simplest and easiest way to use up the remains of the democratic party, as completely as the tories were used up in 1785 and the federal party in 1812. Fernando Wood and his brother Ben are probably aware of this fact, and are acting with malice aforethought. In 1862 we took this democratic party and called it conservative, and nursed it, and coddled it, and gave it a few ideas—it could not take many—and a great variety of stimulants, and finally carried it triumphantly through the Central States elections. Then Fernando Wood and brother Ben (with all his novels about him), and the twin Seymours, thought that they knew a little bit more than anybody else in the world, and so they took the party and crammed it so full of peace that it burst into fragments, and is now almost entirely demolished. Fernando has determined to destroy even these few remaining fragments, and that is the meaning of his peace resolutions. The singular thing about it is that Stebbins and other Congressmen from this city and State should be such nincompoops as to follow the lead of such a New York ward politician as Fernando Wood.

GENERAL GRANT A GREAT MAN.—We publish in another column brief extracts, which will bear reading, from the two leading republican newspapers, the *Times* and *Tribune*, in regard to General Grant. Both of these journals very justly proclaim that Grant is a great general and a great man. It only remains, therefore, for the people to get together and make this great man our next President. We once thought that General McClellan or General Rosecrans would occupy this position; but the distinguished talents of McClellan and Rosecrans developed too early in the war, and the politicians had time to kill them off. The politicians would kill off Grant, also, if they only had the time. Fortunately, it is too late now. We defy the Washington clique to attempt it. Any movement in that direction would be regarded by the people as persecution, and would raise a blaze of indignation which nothing could quell. But, as we have said, there is no longer any danger of that. Grant is the coming man, so long awaited, so anxiously expected. He stands upon the heights of Chattanooga, beneath the sun whose glories he has eclipsed by his more glorious victories, and the whole country looks up to him as the great genius who is to end this war, restore the Union and save us all from the dangers which the end of the war may bring upon us.

SENATOR HALE ALL RIGHT.—We perceive by a note published elsewhere that Senator Hale is at his old post of chairman of the Committee on Naval Affairs in the Senate. We are also glad to see that he is all right, and that he is not going to tolerate any corruption in the Navy Department, but rather is determined to watch over the expenditure for the navy, so as to stop the enormous leaks which seem to be as great in the treasury of that department as in the old vessels bought for the public service. In a few days this Navy bureau will be raked fore and aft, and the country will then be satisfied that it is time for old Gideon to go by the board. There must be a strong investigating committee appointed to clean out the whole establishment.

Musical.

THE GERMAN OPERA.

"Der Freischutz" is certainly one of the most attractive performances of the German Opera troupe; but there certainly seems a disinclination on the part of the public to patronize the deserving efforts of Mr. Anschutz. The house was a very poor one. Those present had an opportunity to enjoy the fine playing of the orchestra, which, under the capable direction of Mr. Anschutz, is as efficient as could be desired by the most exacting. The artists sang and acted their roles most satisfactorily.

Madame Friederici was especially pleasing last evening. She sang with more than usual entrain, and was much applauded. Her voice is fresh and pure. This artiste has gained in public estimation since her debut here, as was evinced by the flattering reception she met with last evening.

Herr Habelmann we have before noted as a great favorite with the public. He was very successful last evening.

Taking into consideration the merit of the Anschutz troupe, we can only account for their lack of success from the fact that our public will patronize nothing that is not fashionable. Italian Opera is that, and German Opera is not.

On Friday evening Mr. Anschutz will produce Gounod's "Faust." There will doubtless be a good house on this occasion.

NEWS FROM WASHINGTON.

WAR GAZETTE.

OFFICIAL.

GENERAL ORDERS—NO. 391.

WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE, WASHINGTON, Dec. 9, 1863.

Commanders of departments are authorized to grant furloughs to enlisted men in the general hospitals within the limits of their command, upon the approval of the medical directors or chief medical officer, the number allowed to be absent at one time to be limited to five per cent, and the period not to exceed thirty days, and to be graduated according to the distance of the applicant from his home, the good conduct of the applicant to be made the rule of the medical officers in recommending the furloughs.

By order of the SECRETARY OF WAR.
E. D. TOWNSEND, Assistant Adjutant General.

GENERAL ORDERS—NO. 392.

WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE, WASHINGTON, Dec. 9, 1863.

I. The Quartermaster General of the army will report to the Paymaster General the name of every officer who in his department has received, or shall hereafter receive, public money or military supplies and fail to take up and account for the same, and render proper returns therefor, or who has hired and employed, or shall hereafter hire or employ, persons and articles in the public service and fail to make out and transmit reports therefor, as required by the army regulations; and the Paymaster General upon the receipt of such notification will give directions to the officers of his corps to make no payments to the delinquent officers until such delinquents shall have rendered the prescribed reports and returns, of which the Paymaster General shall be promptly advised by the Quartermaster General.

II. When officers give or issue certified accounts for purchases made or services rendered in the Quartermaster's Department, they will immediately send an abstract of them to the principal officer of the department in which they are serving, and to the Quartermaster General at Washington. Any officer failing to forward these abstracts will have his pay stopped until he sends them.

By order of the SECRETARY OF WAR.
E. D. TOWNSEND, Assistant Adjutant General.

GENERAL NEWS.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16, 1863.

HAPPY EFFECT OF GEN. BUTLER'S ORDER NO. 46.

Information has been received here that the Order No. 46 of General Butler, recently issued, has worked wonders in reclaiming to their allegiance to the government sympathizers with rebellion in that department. Its operation began in the city of Norfolk on Saturday last, when a number of hitherto noted opponents of the government voluntarily came in and took the oath of allegiance. On Monday the number of applicants for certificates of loyalty were so great that they could hardly be accommodated, and it was recommended to the Provost Marshal that he should place himself on the top of the Custom House, and call upon all the citizens to hold up their hands at once and take the oath of allegiance. The institution by Gen. Butler of a civil fund to be applied to the renovation of the city of Norfolk, by supplying gas, providing a civil police and steam fire department, repairing wharves, bridges and streets, and making other improvements, is winning the confidence of even the most rabid opponents of the government, and effecting a total change of popular opinion in that department.

FINANCIAL MATTERS.

Since the middle of October last the National Bank Note Company have printed for the government nearly eighty-five millions of legal tender notes. Sixty-five millions have been received and paid out to the army, navy and contract creditors of the government. The remaining twenty millions are being printed at the rate of one million per day, and as soon as received and registered are sent to the Assistant Treasurer at New York to meet drafts on that office. When the whole shall have been paid out the non-interest bearing Treasury notes, added to the outstanding postal and fractional currency, will make over five hundred millions of dollars. Fifty millions of the eighty five millions just issued is the reserved fund authorized by last Congress to meet temporary deposits and now paid out. In his annual report Mr. Chase recommends the removal of the restriction upon the temporary deposits, and that authority be conferred upon him to issue legal tender notes to the extent of one-half of such deposits. If these should reach two hundred millions, he would thus be authorized to issue one hundred millions additional legal tenders to meet the same, all of which would be added to the currency of the country. He also asks a repeal of the restriction of national bank note currency to three hundred millions. If this request should be granted, and it probably will be, and the present outstanding legal tenders should not be withdrawn from circulation, the currency of the country will soon exceed one thousand millions. It is not and cannot be expected that even the announciation of a conclusion of peace would very materially reduce this volume of currency until the resumption of specie payments.

THE ANTI-GOLD AND SILVER SPECULATION BILL.

An effort will be made to pass in the Senate, before the holidays, the bill of General Lane, of Kansas, to restrict speculative traffic in gold, silver and exchange. It was not introduced without consultation with other gentlemen occupying high public positions.

THE PEACE RUMORS.

The efforts on the part of the stock jobbers in New York to manufacture the peace commissioner item of news is a subject of much merriment here. It has been ascertained that this canard originated in a series of despatches procured to be sent from Washington to a number of brokers in New York. These were signed with the cabalistic letters, "J. H. H." Immediately an inquiry was instituted as to the identity of this "J. H. H.," and no responsible person could be discovered to answer the description. Wall street, however, caught the dodge, and every newspaper representative in Washington was immediately flooded with despatches from New York, Brooklyn, Williamsburg, Jersey City and other places in the immediate vicinity of New York, reiterating the fact that letters had been exhibited and positive intelligence received showing that commissioners, either from the rebel government at Richmond or from some of the rebel States, were on their way hither with propositions of peace. Some of the newspaper people swallowed the bait; but the HERALD correspondents preferred to ascertain the facts, although a dozen personal communications of the facts had been made to them, and as many more despatches from people in and about your city whom they did not know were sent to them. The whole affair was an adroitly planned "sell;" but the gentlemen engaged in it are recommended to transmit vouchers for respectability when they next attempt to sell the HERALD.

PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS.

The proceedings of the Senate to-day were of an unimportant character. Adjournment followed soon after the reading of the journal. The failure on the part of the Senate to concur in the House resolution to adjourn on Friday till the 6th of January is doubtless owing to the fact that there are now several important bills which require immediate attention. These are now in the hands of the committees, which it is believed will not be able to report before Friday or Monday. It is not improbable that the bills will be passed early next week, and Congress will then be enabled to adjourn till the specified time.

The proceedings of the House to-day were generally uninteresting, the only excitement having been on the resolution of Mr. Rollins, of Missouri, substantially the same as the famous Crittenden resolution. It lies over for debate, the House having refused to order the previous question.

THE ADJOURNMENT OF CONGRESS FOR THE HOLIDAYS.

The Senate having refused to concur with the House in the resolution to adjourn from Friday next to January 6, the members are somewhat troubled in regard to the chances of eating their Christmas dinners at home. Another resolution was adopted to adjourn from Wednesday next to January 5, upon which the Senate will act to-morrow. Some surprise is expressed at the action of the Senate, as that body has heretofore been very liberal in the matter of adjournments.

AMENDMENTS TO THE ENROLMENT ACT.

Senator Wilson's amendment to the Conscription bill exempts the following persons:—Such as are mentally or physically unfit for the service; the Vice President of the United States; the judges of the various courts of the United States; the heads of the various executive departments of the United States; the Governors of the several States; the only son liable to military duty of a widow, wholly dependent on his labor for support; the only son of an aged or infirm parent or parents, wholly dependent on his labor for support, and in case there are several sons all drafted such parent or parents may elect which son shall be exempt; the only brother of orphan children under twelve years old, wholly dependent on his labors for support, where among several sons two have been permanently disabled, or have died in the military service, the residue shall be exempt; any person convicted of felony. The separation of the enrollment in classes is abolished. A person enrolled, moving to another locality, may have his name taken from the list and placed upon the enrollment in the place of his residence. Any person enrolled who shall procure an acceptable substitute shall be exempt.

SOLDIERS' BOUNTIES.

The bill reported back from the Senate's Committee on Military Affairs, with amendments, reduces the proposed bounty for enlistment of veterans to fifteen dollars, and of others to ten dollars, and includes those only who are not now in the service.

SEVERDY JOHNSON'S LATE SPEECH ON SLAVERY AND EMANCIPATION.

The following important passage having been accidentally omitted in yesterday's Senate report, it is now supplied, in the remarks of Hon. Reverdy Johnson, of Maryland, as follows:—

It might be admitted, he thought, that in the eye of the constitution slaves are property in those States where they are so held; but they are persons also. Representation in Congress is based on the fact that they are persons. Though slaves, they are men. They owe allegiance by birth, and though the Supreme Court has decided that, under the clause defining the jurisdiction of that court, they are not citizens, in relation to other clauses of the constitution it may be far different. They have the protection of the government to a certain extent at least, and why should they not contribute to its defence. As property they may be taken for the public use on compensation to their owners being made. As to the compensation, some complaints had been made, and justly, perhaps, as the Senator thought, in regard to the manner in which the law had been executed by some of the agents of the government. This, however, should not induce the Senator to lift his voice in the Senate or his arm out of it to weaken or embarrass the government in its efforts to suppress the rebellion. When the authority of the government is restored to its full extent, then inquiry might and would be made into all such matters. As to the slave himself, compensation divested the owner of all his rights, and conveyed them to the public. He (Mr. Johnson) had never doubted that the employment of the slave in the military service of the country *ipso facto* emancipated him. It would be disgraceful, after the employment of colored men to defend its existence, that this government should permit them to return to slavery. He thanked God they never could be re-enslaved. It gave him pleasure to remember that when he formerly had the honor of occupying a seat on this floor, in 1847, he declared, in a debate upon the subject of slavery, that it was wrong as a system, morally and politically, and especially economically. Slavery was indefensible. The people of this country were rapidly becoming wiser on this subject.

NEWSPAPER APPOINTMENTS.

At this session of Congress the newspaper correspondents in Washington, except those of the HERALD, who have asked for nothing, have been very fortunate in securing appointments as clerks of committees and other lucrative positions in the gift of the Senate and House. Nearly all of them have thus been provided for. It is evident that our national legislators appreciate the power and influence of the press.

ARRIVAL OF GENERAL SCHOFIELD.

Gen. Schofield arrived here to-day, and had an interview with the President. It is understood that he comes here at the request of the President to explain his course in Missouri. It is generally believed that he is to be relieved of the command of that department.

CONFIRMATION OF THE REBEL REFUSAL TO RECEIVE MORE PROVISIONS FOR OUR PRISONERS.

The *Star* has the following:—Last evening the Chief of the Bureau of Exchange and Prisoners, Major General Hitchcock, received from Brigadier General Meredith a copy of a letter addressed to him on the 11th instant, by Robert Ould, the rebel Commissioner of Exchange, &c., announcing the determination of the rebel War Department hereafter to receive no more provisions from the North for our prisoners in their hands. We hear from Fortress Monroe that he alleges persistent "vilification and abuse" with reference to the manner in which the rebel authorities have carried out their pledges upon the subject as the reason why they break up the arrangement, and promises, however, to deliver faithfully all the supplies in question that had been received up to the time the letter was written, and adds that hereafter our prisoners in their hands will be rationed precisely as they ration their soldiers in the field.

Without doubt the allegation of "vilification and misrepresentation" put forward as the reason for declining hereafter to receive such supplies is a mere subterfuge, the real reason being the pressure of the jealousy of the people of Richmond of the fact that through the care and liberality of our government and their friends at home the Union prisoners in their hands were said to be living better than any family could live in the rebel capital.

THE NAVY.

The gunboat Itasca, which arrived at the Navy Yard on Friday last, having been repaired, left this morning for her station on the West coast blockading squadron.

The Sassacus, whose wheelhouse was broken in on the Potomac recently in a collision, is being rapidly repaired and will soon be ready for sea.

The gunboat Eutaw arrived this morning from Philadelphia. On her trip she proved herself one of our fastest gunboats, and it is said that she will be immediately sent on an important mission.

NAVAL PROMOTIONS.

The President has nominated to the Senate Commander Porter, to be a rear admiral, and First Engineer John H. Long, to be a chief engineer in the navy.

NAVAL ORDERS.

Captain J. C. Grayson, of the marine corps, has been ordered to command the marine guard of the United States steam sloop Brooklyn.

Lieutenant Wallace, United States marine corps, has reported for duty at the Navy Yard in this city.

Lieutenant Fagan has been detached from Company G, Marine Battalion and ordered to the flagship Wabash.

DISMISSED.

Second Lieutenant E. B. Sturgeon, of the United States Marine corps, has been tried by a naval general court martial in session at New Orleans, for "absence without leave and drunkenness," and sentenced to be dismissed the service of the United States, to date from December 7. The proceedings have been approved.

MOSBY'S GUERILLA OPERATIONS.

Night before last Mosby, with a gang of about ninety guerillas, made a descent upon the picket lines outside the defences south of the Potomac, but without effecting any serious damage. Our cavalry were sent in pursuit.

An absurd rumor is circulating to-day throughout the city that Mosby was in town yesterday afternoon, and the military authorities have been on a sharp lookout for the guerilla, but without success.

THE REBELS ON THE LOWER POTOMAC.

It is reported at the Navy Yard that the rebels a few days since opened with field pieces on our gunboats in the mouth of the Rappahannock, and that the steamers, after firing a few shots in return, hauled off into the Potomac.

VISITORS TO THE RUSSIAN FLEET.

Yesterday Commodore Harwood, commanding the Washington Navy Yard, accompanied by several officers, visited the Russian fleet, where he was received with appropriate honors.

THE WAGES OF THE NAVY YARD WORKMEN.

Owing to the recent dissatisfaction of the employes of the Navy Yard, in relation to their wages, the Secretary of the Navy has ordered the appointment of a board of officers, whose duty it shall be to ascertain the rules of the other departments upon the subject. He has also directed the commandant of the yard to adopt the same regulations.

SENT TO FORT LAFAYETTE.

Captain J. H. Tyler and Major W. H. Naley were sent to Fort Lafayette last evening, by order of the Secretary of War.

SICK MICHIGAN SOLDIERS SENT HOME.

An order has been issued by the Secretary of War, granting thirty days leave to all Michigan soldiers in the hospitals and convalescent camp who are able to go home. A large number left to day.

PARDON OF ONE OF THE CALIFORNIA PIRATES.

Since the arrest of the so called Chapman pirates, lately convicted in San Francisco, frequent applications have been made for the pardon of one of them, Alfred Rubery, by John Bright, the well known English friend of America, with the assent of Senator Conness and Justice Field, of California. The President has finally consented to pardon Rubery, who is an English subject.

THIRTY-EIGHTH CONGRESS.

FIRST SESSION.

Senate.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16, 1863.

EMANCIPATION.

Mr. Wade, (rep.) of Ohio, presented a memorial from ladies, asking the passage of an act for the emancipation of all persons of African descent. Referred to the Committee on ——.

EXEMPTION CLERGYMEN FROM THE DRAFT.

Mr. Saulsbury, (opp.) of Del., presented a memorial from a clergyman of Delaware, asking exemption from the draft.

Mr. Saulsbury remarked that the pastor who attends to the duties of his holy mission of peace and good will to men ought to be exempt from military duty, while political parsons should be placed in the front rank and made to fight until the war is over.

The memorial of Mr. Saulsbury was referred to the Military Committee.

CONGRESSIONAL PRINTING.

Mr. Wilson, (rep.) of Mass., presented a memorial