THE NEW YORK HERALD.

WHOLE NO. 10,015. NEW YORK, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1864. PRICE THREE CENTS.

NEWS FROM WASHINGTON.

Forthcoming Presidential Proclamation of Universal Emancipation.

Fresh Propositions to Prohibit Slavery by Amending the Constitution.

Proposed Sale of Surplus Gold in the Treasury.

Action of the House on the Whiskey Tax.

The Question Referred to a Conference Committee.

General Garfield's Defence and Eulogy of General Rosecrans, &c., &c., &c.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 17, 1864.

FORTHCOMING PROCLAMATION OF UNIVERSAL EMANCIPATION.

It is understood that on the 22d of February Mr. Lincoln will issue a proclamation of universal emancipation, including the border States.

ACTION OF THE HOUSE ON THE WHISKEY TAX.

The House having refused to reconsider the vote disagreeing with the Senate amendment to the Internal Revenue bill establishing a sliding scale, the tax remains at thirty cents a gallon. The House having asked for a committee of conference on the amendments disagreed to, it is probable that some plan similar in principle to that of the Senate will be agreed upon and passed.

MR. LINCOLN CORNERED IN THE "WHISKEY CORNER."

The friends of our President are seriously alarmed about the aspect that the Whiskey bill has assumed. They say that Mr. Lincoln, whose popular strength is mainly in his name of "Honest Abe," cannot sign or approve the bill with any hope of retaining his *sobriquet*. *Per contra*, if he vetoes the bill in its present shape, it is a quarrel of worse than blood—of money—with the powerful interests that have staked their fortunes on the success of this "Whiskey Corner." What, then, can a President, who is also a candidate for the next Presidency, do? Shunning the Scylla of losing his reputation for integrity by approving the measure, he is dashed on the charybdis of a force fund with the powerful politicians who have put up their respective piles on the passage of the act. So seriously is the danger regarded by Mr. Lincoln's sincere friends that they have appointed a delegation to wait upon him and call his attention to the narrow majority of only four votes by which the bill has been whipped through the House. They say that the opposition of all shades are in the highest hopes he will sign it, and that if he does the incident will be made to figure in the next canvass as one of the most ludicrous and, for that very reason, one of the most powerful arguments against giving him a second term.

THE PROPOSED SALE OF GOLD.

Mr. Hooper, from the Committee on Ways and Means, made two attempts to-day to obtain unanimous consent to introduce a resolution authorizing the Secretary of the Treasury to sell such amount of gold as may have accumulated in the Treasury beyond the necessities of the government for the payment of interest on the public debt, in order to relieve the market and prevent an excessive premium and consequent depreciation of the currency. Objection was made, however, and it will come up when the committee is called under the rules. Mr. Hanson stated that the surplus for this and the next month would be eight or ten millions of dollars. It is probable that the bill will pass. There are now in the Treasury twenty five millions of gold, and there can be very well spared ten millions to be thrown upon the market. It is understood that the Secretary is anxious for the passage of such a measure, and it is believed that by this means the excessive premium on gold will be immediately and under the operation of the bill permanently reduced.

DEFENCE OF GENERAL ROSECRANS.

Mr. Garfield, of Ohio, to-day made an enthusiastic and eulogistic speech in favor of General Rosecrans, upon an amendment offered by him to include that officer in the joint resolution of thanks to General Thomas and his command for their services at Chickamauga. He claimed that Rosecrans had actually accomplished more than any other general during the war, but that McClellan, Grant and others had received the credit to which he was justly entitled. His remarks appeared to make considerable impression upon the House, and the resolutions and amendment were finally referred to the Military Committee.

SPEECH OF MR. COX ON AMALGAMATION.

The speech of Mr. Cox, in the House to-day, upon the bill creating a Bureau of Freedmen's Affairs, created much amusement and attention. He ventilated the new theory of miscegenation, or blending of the races, and asserted that it was becoming one of the doctrines of the dominant party, and that soon Congress would be called upon to establish a Bureau of Miscegenation. His theory was that slavery was dying out as a consequence of the war, and that it could not be saved by bureaus or overseers, or even by the doctrine of miscegenation; that under the present management slavery and the negro would be crushed together, and that the proper way was to leave the matter to the local governors, as the only way in which the negro could be saved. He quoted largely from Wendell Phillips and other leading abolitionists to show that the miscegenation theory had been adopted as a tenet of the party. Mr. Washburne, of Illinois, read extracts from a work written by Mr. Cox, entitled "The Buckeye Abroad," to show that he did not formerly entertain the same opinions in regard to the colored race as compared with the whites. The affair altogether created more than ordinary interest.

INTERESTING DISCUSSION IN THE SENATE.

The discussion in the Senate to-day was unusually spicy, the speech of Mr. Davis being almost entirely of a personal character. Mr. Wilson, at whom the personalities were directed, finally called the Senator to order, protesting against such misrepresentation. Other Senators afterwards also raised the question of order, and finally objection was made to any further remarks by Mr. Davis. This was subsequently withdrawn upon condition that personal attacks should not be indulged in. Mr. Doolittle gave notice, in the course of the speech, that unless the dignity of the Senate was better observed he should feel constrained to withdraw from the floor. The statement made by Mr. Davis during his speech to-day, that he should speak but little more during this session, as he supposed the Senate was tired of hearing him, and he was tired of hearing himself, appeared to give unusual satisfaction.

IMPORTANT RAILROAD BILL.

An important bill was introduced to-day in behalf of the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad. It provides for the completion of the road by the most feasible route, including Des Moines and Council Bluffs to the Missouri river and Omaha; grants lands to the company and provides for branch lines connecting with other Iowa roads.

CAPTAIN WICKS SENT TO THE ALBANY PENITENTIARY.

Yesterday Captain Wicks, of the One Hundred and Sixty-ninth New York Volunteers, was taken from the Old Capitol prison, where he has been confined for some time past, and forwarded to the Albany Penitentiary, to serve his term of sentence by court martial.

APPOINTMENTS CONFIRMED.

The Senate, in executive session to-day, confirmed the nominations of Edward H. Dunell, to be Judge of the District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana; Thomas Seeley, of Iowa, Register of Land Offices at Des Moines; Preamus H. Irish, of Nebraska, as Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Territory of Utah; John H. McMonagh, of California, to be Hospital Chaplain.

PROMOTION.

Captain Wilson, the Chief Quartermaster of the Army of the Potomac, has been promoted to a lieutenant colonelcy in the regular army. This promotion is well deserved.

DESERTERS TAKING THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE.

Forty deserters arrived here to-day from Lee's army, and took the oath of allegiance.

THE GRADE AND PAY OF CHAPLAINS.

It is understood that the House Committee on Invalid Pensions is preparing a bill giving army chaplains the rank of captains, with the pay and pension, in case of death in that service, attached to that rank.

THIRTY-EIGHTH CONGRESS.

FIRST SESSION.

Senate.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 17, 1864.

PRINTING GEN. M'CLELLAN'S REPORT.

Mr. Anthony, (rep.) of R. I., from the Printing Committee, reported back the bill authorizing the printing of ten thousand copies of the report of General McClellan, with an amendment reducing the number to five thousand.

The amendment was adopted.

COMPENSATION FOR THE SCHOONER FAIRFAX.

Mr. Morgan, (rep.) of N. Y., introduced a memorial of F. R. and P. Dodge, Trustees of Charles Dodge and Sylvanus Mott, of New York, asking compensation for the schooner Fairfax, taken to shield the United States steamer Resolute, and destroyed while being so used. Referred to the Committee on Commerce.

PETITIONS FOR AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION.

Mr. Sumner, (rep.) of Mass., presented memorials of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian church and of a mass Convention of Christian people of Alleghany City, Pa., praying for such amendments to the constitution of the United States as may promote changes with respect to offices, slavery and other matters. Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

INDEMNITY FOR THE FRENCH SHIP LA MANCHE.

The Vice President laid before the Senate a message from the President transmitting a report from the Secretary of State relative to the claim of the owners of the French ship La Manche, and recommending an appropriation for its satisfaction pursuant to the award of the arbitrators. Referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

SALE OF MINERAL LANDS—AID FOR THE PACIFIC RAILROAD.

Mr. Sumner presented petitions of citizens of Cincinnati praying for the sale of the mineral lands of the Rocky Mountain country. Also a bill to aid in the construction of the Northern and Central Pacific Railroad Referred to the Committee on Public Lands.

ABOLITION OF SLAVERY.

Mr. Brown, (rep.) of Mo., offered a joint resolution to abolish slavery throughout the States and Territories. The resolution provides that from and after the passage of the act slavery shall not exist in any State or Territory, any law, usage, claim or custom to the contrary notwithstanding; and prohibits all involuntary servitude, except for crime. Referred to the Select Committee on Slavery and Freedmen.

LANDS FOR THE SUPPORT OF ORPHANS OF SOLDIERS AND SAILORS.

Mr. Pomeroy, (rep.) of Kansas, introduced a bill donating public lands to the several States for the support and education of orphan children of soldiers and sailors who die in the military and naval service of the United States. Referred to the Committee on Public Lands.

This bill donates the same amount of land that was given for colleges—namely, 30,000 acres for each Representative and Senator. One fourth of the land scrip may be applied for homesteads for such orphans as desire them; acceptance within two years secures the benefits of the proposed act.

RAILROAD AND TELEGRAPH LAND GRANTS.

Mr. Lane, (rep.) of Kansas, introduced a bill to amend an act for a grant of lands to aid in the construction of railroads and telegraphs. Referred to Committee on Public Lands.

THE CONFISCATION ACT.

Mr. Johnson, (opp.) of Md., from the Judiciary Committee, reported back adversely the resolution in amendment of the joint resolution explanatory of the Confiscation act, which passed the House February 5.

Mr. Johnson also, from the same committee, reported back adversely the bill of Mr. Sumner to remove doubts on the construction of the joint resolution explanatory of the Confiscation act, and to declare that such resolution shall not be construed to create any other restriction on the forfeiture of the real estate of an offender under the said act than created by the constitution of the United States in the case of an attainder of treason.

INCREASE OF PAY OF COLORED SOLDIERS.

The bill equalizing the pay of soldiers of the United States being under consideration,

Mr. Davis, (opp.) of Ky., resumed his remarks on the amendment offered by him yesterday. He said, though the writ of habeas corpus was suspended, it did not suspend the trial, which every citizen has a right to under the constitution and laws. The President assumed the enormous power to prohibit the return of the States under their constitutions, and requires that certain conditions, abhorrent to the majority of the people of these States, shall be complied with before the State shall be allowed to return to the Union. The re-election of the present President, or the election of one of similar radical views, would confirm these enormous usurpations and abuses of power. In the course of his speech Mr. Davis referred to a remark attributed to Mr. Seward by Lord Lyons on newspaper authority, in which the Secretary of State is reported as having said:—"My Lord, I can ring this bell and a citizen of New York will be arrested, and this, and a citizen of Indiana will be placed in duress." Mr. Davis proceeded to comment on such a state of affairs.

Mr. Anthony, (rep.) of R. I., interrupted, and wished to know whether the Senator from Kentucky was cognizant of the truth of the paragraph, and would inquire whether it were not more proper to know the facts before parading them in the Senate with his comments upon them?

Mr. Davis declined to be interrupted, as he knew the Senate was weary with his talk, and to acknowledge the God's truth he was tired of it himself. (Great laughter.) Mr. Davis referred to a meeting held at one time in Massachusetts, at which resolutions were passed inciting the negroes of the South to revolt against their masters. The Senator from Massachusetts took a prominent part in that meeting and yet did not raise a word of objection against such an outrageous proposition.

Mr. Wilson, (rep.) of Mass., said he was at the meeting merely as a spectator.

Mr. Davis proceeded at great length in denunciation of the course of Massachusetts since the formation of the federal government, and made some satirical allusions to her Senators on the Senate floor at this time. He said that the military Senator (Mr. Wilson) had attempted to bully and domineer over those who were his peers on this floor.

Mr. Wilson called Senator Davis to order.

The Chair sustained the question of order.

Mr. Doolittle, (rep.) of Wis., thought the whole tenor of the remarks of the Senator from Kentucky were calculated to create personal strife. He should either call the Senator from Kentucky to order or leave the Senate, as he would not sit in his seat and listen to these personal attacks. They were not only out of order, but beneath the dignity of the Senate. The time of the Senate was too precious to be wasted in personal vituperation.

Mr. Johnson, (opp.) of Md., agreed with the Senator from Wisconsin, that much of what had been said by the Senator from Kentucky was productive of nothing but mischief.

Mr. Wilson hoped that the Senator from Kentucky would be allowed to conclude his remarks whatever they might be.

Mr. Sumner had never made any harsh allusion to the Senator from Kentucky, and he was willing he should proceed in his attack against him until doomsday.

Mr. Davis then concluded his remarks.

AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION—PROHIBITION OF SLAVERY.

Mr. Sumner offered amendments to the constitution of the United States as a substitute to those reported by Senator Trumbull from the Judiciary Committee a few days ago, and asked that they might be made the special order for Monday next.

Mr. Sumner's amendments are as follows:—

There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude anywhere in the United States or within the jurisdiction thereof, otherwise than in punishment for crime, and that Congress may make all laws necessary and proper to enforce its prohibition.

Second—To strike out the third paragraph, second section of the fourth article of the constitution, except the words "excluding Indians not taxed," so that the whole clause should read "Representation and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several States of the Union according to their numbers, excepting Indians not taxed."

Third—To strike out from the third paragraph, section fourth of the constitution, the words "No person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, and escaping to another, shall in consequence of any law or regulation therein be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on the claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due."

EXECUTIVE SESSION.

On motion of Mr. Hale, the Senate went into executive session, and shortly afterwards adjourned.

House of Representatives.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 17, 1864.

GRANTING LANDS TO IOWA.

Mr. Allison, (rep.) of Iowa, introduced a bill granting lands in Iowa for certain railroads heretofore provided for. The bill was referred to the Committee on Public Lands.

This measure is intended to insure an immediate completion of the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad across Iowa to Omaha, connecting with the Union Pacific Railroad at that point.

RESOLUTION TO SELL THE SURPLUS GOLD IN THE TREASURY.

Mr. Hooper, (rep.) of Mass., from the Committee on Ways and Means, asked leave to introduce a resolution authorizing the Secretary of the Treasury to sell any surplus of gold in the Treasury.

The resolution sought to be offered by Mr. Hooper was then read. It provides that the Secretary of the Treasury be authorized, from time to time, at his discretion, to sell any gold coin in the Treasury over and above the amount which, in his opinion, may be required by the government to pay the interest on the public debt and for other purposes.

Mr. Cox, (opp.) of Ohio, before giving his consent to the introduction of the resolution, wished to know how much gold there was in the Treasury? What is the object of selling the gold at this time? What will be the effect of selling a large amount of gold upon commerce and exchange at this time? Would it not have the effect of convulsing the whole commercial system?

Mr. Edgerton, (opp.) of Ind., objected to the introduction of the resolution, saying that the gold will bring a higher price after a little while.

Mr. Hanson, (rep.) of Iowa, said that the demands of the government for payments in gold had brought into the Treasury so large an amount of coin as to embarrass merchants in obtaining gold to discharge their liabilities. This has caused a rise in the price of gold in the market, and has placed the government, to use a technical term, in the position of the "principal bear." Unless the Secretary of the Treasury shall be authorized to relieve this condition of things, the effect will be further to advance the price of gold. Last Saturday the payments in New York were half a million in gold. So from day to day as the importations come in, the want of gold and the facilities of the merchants for obtaining it diminish. It was for this reason that the Committee on Ways and Means, while believing it not necessary for the Treasury to relieve itself of the entire amount of gold on hand, had prepared this resolution authorizing the Secretary of the Treasury from time to time, as the surplus will allow, to sell gold to meet the legitimate and constant demands imposed by the law itself. The price of gold yesterday reached one hundred and sixty-one. The balance now in the Treasury beyond the wants of the government is eight or ten millions of dollars.

Mr. Brooks, (opp.) of N. Y., said—that the resolution was of great importance, and should not be hurriedly passed. The Secretary of the Treasury has control of all the paper money of the country, and is a great rag baron.

Mr. Hanson asked that the resolution be permitted to be reported to-day and considered to-morrow.

Objections to this were made from the opposition side.

THANKS TO THE RE-ENLISTED VETERANS.

Mr. Farnsworth, (rep.) of Ill., introduced the following joint resolution:—

Resolved, That the thanks of Congress are hereby given to those noble and brave men who, having already so gallantly endured the hardships and perils of war for more than two years in support of their country and flag, present the sublime spectacle of again voluntarily enrolling themselves in the Army of the Union for another three years' campaign, or so long as the war shall continue.

Second, That the Secretary of War cause these resolutions to be read to each of the veteran regiments which have re-enlisted or shall re-enlist in both the volunteer or regular forces of the United States.

The resolutions were unanimously passed without debate.

THE INTERNAL REVENUE BILL—THE WHISKEY TAX.

The Senate's amendments to the Internal Revenue bill were then taken up.

The House, by a vote of ninety-four against forty-three, laid on the table the motion to reconsider the vote by which the House disagreed to the sliding scale on spirits.

The House yesterday agreed to strike out the twenty cents additional tax on adulterated spirits, and also the proposed tax on spirits on hand for sale.

The House disagreed to the Senate's amendment of the sliding scale on foreign spirits, retaining the additional tax of forty cents.

With these exceptions, all the other amendments of the Senate were agreed to.

The House has asked for a conference committee on the amendments disagreed to.

THE MASSACHUSETTS CONTESTED ELECTION.

Mr. Dawes, (rep.) of Mass., from the Committee on Elections, reported resolutions declaring that John S. Sleeper is not entitled to a seat as representative from the Third Congressional district of Massachusetts, and that Alexander H. Rice is entitled to the seat.

The resolutions were ordered to be printed.

A BUREAU OF FREEDMEN'S AFFAIRS.

The House resumed the consideration of the bill to establish a bureau of freedmen's affairs.

Mr. Cox, (opp.) of Ohio, after discussing its constitutionality and humanity, stated that he would not support so novel, sweeping and revolutionary a scheme, establishing an eleemosynary system for the blacks by the federal government, and making the government a plantation speculator and overseer. He held that the highest humanity was adherence to the constitution. We are invoked to look the fact in the face that millions more of slaves will be freed who are unfit for freedom, and need care. This is too true. We cannot, by shutting our eyes, ignore the fact. He accepted the events. He advised the humanity of New England, fattening upon Western toil to do its part in saving the slaves, so improvidently freed. If slavery be doomed, then the conflict will be between blacks and white and no longer slavery or freedom. No system like this can save the slave; no new system of miscegenation, which is but another name for amalgamation, and which is being urged by abolitionists, and to establish which system no doubt we shall soon have a bureau. The Northern democracy are not responsible for his extirpation. While we never were pro-slavery, we were for non-intervention. Slavery may be crushed out as the war goes on, but so will the slave. If slavery had to die, good men would have preferred the slave to be saved, and that it should have been by the enforced action of the States, not by the rough usages of war or the bare usurpation of power. For this condition of the slave the dominant party is responsible. In striking at slavery they have struck down that liberty of which the Northern democracy are the champions. They have marred the perfection and perilled the endurance of our political fabric. For this they must answer next fall. No more cry of pro-slavery democracy. The issue will be the old order, with democracy to administer it, or continued revolution, with despotism to guide it—the old Union, with as much local sovereignty and constitutional and personal freedom as may be saved from the abrasion of war and the aggrandisement of power, or new abolition military unity of territory with trinity of debt, tyranny and fanaticism.

Mr. Washburne, (rep.) of Ill., said he had always listened to the gentleman's speech with attention; for he had heard it several times before. They should not, probably, during the next session of Congress hear the gentleman again rehearse his speech; for, judging by the recent elections in Ohio, and particularly in the gentleman's district, he would say to him, in the language of Watts, and in as solemn a spirit,

Ye living men, come view the ground
Where you must shortly lie. (Laughter.)

He (Mr. Washburne) desired the House to hear what their friend from Ohio had written in his book called "The Buckeye Abroad," as to what he saw at Rome and while he was rambling among the gilded corridors of St. Peter's, writing about the music which ravished the ear, and the incense which titillated the nose. The author says:—"Soon there arose in the chamber [what a shocking thing it would be here] a plain African delivering a sermon in Latin in the most graceful manner. The priest referred to was an Abyssinian." What a commentary? Mr. Washburne said this is one of our African prejudices. (Laughter.) The head of the great Catholic Church, surrounded by the ripe scholars of the age from all parts of the world, listening, not to our distinguished friend from Ohio, but to the eloquence of the despised negro, and thereby, in the language of the author, "illustrating to the world the common bond of brotherhood that binds the human race." (Laughter.) Mr. Washburne further read from Mr. Cox's book, making comments as he proceeded, and referred to the passage in which it is said copies of the sermon of the citizen of African descent, beautifully printed, were distributed at the door of the cathedral.

Mr. Cox wished to reply, but an opportunity was not furnished for that purpose.

THANKS TO GENERAL THOMAS AND HIS ARMY.

The House took up the Senate joint resolution of thanks to Major General George H. Thomas and the officers and men under his command at the battle of Chickamauga.

Mr. Garfield, (rep.) of Ohio, moved to include the name of Major General William S. Rosecrans.

Mr. Farnsworth thought that thanks to that officer ought to be provided for in a separate resolution.

Mr. Garfield said that the thanks of Congress had become a cheap thing. The time was when the thanks of Congress were bestowed only for great deeds, and then in the most solemn manner. But thanks are now given, not only to chiefs but to subordinates, and no one inquired whether in thanking one man somebody else was not robbed. He had been so willing to thank any man that he had not seen fit to interpose any objection. Now, however, when it came so close to his own history, he could not permit such a resolution to go through without protest. He appealed to the House not to do an injustice by singling out a subordinate in battle and give to him the thanks of Congress without saying a word about the principal, not only in the battle of Chickamauga, but in a series of important campaigns. Some one had said that Congress had already voted thanks to General Rosecrans, but that was last year for his conduct at Murfreesboro. He was ready to meet with a denial any man who might say that General Rosecrans was not entitled to thanks for his conduct at Chickamauga. It had been the custom of the press to treat the battle as a defeat. If that was a defeat we might welcome all such disasters. If an army continued to suffer such defeats the rebel armies would soon be destroyed and the great campaigns terminated. The object of the movement at Chickamauga was to drive the enemy beyond the Tennessee river and lay the base for future operations. The Army of the Cumberland met and repulsed the rebels, and gained the key of the Cumberland Mountains and held it. If there had been a greater success against such odds since the war began he had not heard of it. Our army, on that day not more than forty-two thousand, met not less than seventy five thousand of the enemy, who threw the weight of their mighty forces upon us, and in the afternoon not more than twenty-five thousand of our troops met that mighty host, and at the last charge the rebels were driven from our border. The history of the country would tell us that Rosecrans won the battles in Western Virginia at the commencement of the war, but another had carried away the honors. Mr. Garfield rapidly traced the military operations of Gen Rosecrans at Bowling Green, Murfreesboro and at other points, and said at Chattanooga he had numbers superior to the enemy, while at Chickamauga the rebels outnumbered us. He would honor General Thomas, but General Thomas would not desire to be promoted at the expense of General Rosecrans. General Thomas' name deserved to be written in letters of gold. Before he parted with General Thomas, the latter said to him, in the most solemn manner, after the battle of Chickamaugua, "By all means prevent the removal of Rosecrans from the command of the army." Thus, said Mr. Garfield, you would burden General Thomas with thanks at the expense of his superior officer.

On motion of Mr. Fenton, (rep.) of N. Y., the resolution was referred to the Committee on Military Affairs.

GENERAL DEBATE.

The House went into Committee of the Whole on the State of the Union and took up the Navy Appropriation bill.

Mr. Dawson, (opp.) of Pa., made a speech in favor of the amendment for paying seamen in gold or the equivalent.

Mr. McBride, (rep.) of Oregon, regarding the war as one for self defence, made a strong Union speech.

The Committee rose, and at half-past four the House adjourned.

Arrivals and Departures.

ARRIVALS.

LIVERPOOL—Steamship North American, at Portland—F W Duncombe, Lieuts Savage and Robins, J B Stevenson, Capts J M Brown, Chas Gallaghan and A P Boyd, Thos G Berney, and 91 steerage.

HAVANA—Steamship Eagle—Mr Scudder, Miss Blatchford, Mrs Blatchford, R Stuyvesant, lady and maid; Senora Da C Jauregue, E A Vidand, J M Damon, Ramon Longoria, Lorenzo del Bosal, A E Plackeroeelles, Dr R Arthur, R A Tucker, Edward A Weeks and lady, C D Tallman, F Karci, L Perez Byron, E Stevens, Jr, Mrs Mary Baxter, Rd Fort, Dr E Penguil, J M Bacagiupi, Mrs P H Vanderwoort, Miss E Chenell, Edwin Gerard, G W Almond, J A Machado and wife; M B Finch, Mrs Hernandez and child; J M Moyorga, J B Austin, J B Griffith and M Bred.

IMPORTANT FROM THE GULF.

Arrival of the United States Steamship McClellan.

Capture of the Steam Blockade Runner Cumberland by the De Soto.

The Cargo of the Cumberland—Entente Cordiale—Description of the Prize.

Presents for Jeff. Davis and Mallory Captured with the Cumberland.

The Beauregard Captures Another Prize, &c., &c., &c.

The United States steamship McClellan, Alfred G. Gray commanding, arrived at this port yesterday morning, having left the bar at the mouth of the Mississippi on the 8th inst., at half-past six A. M. She arrived at Key West on the 10th, at twenty-five minutes past four P. M., and sailed thence on the 11th, at thirty-five minutes past ten P. M. She reports having left at Key West the transport De Molay, of Boston, with troops on board; the gunboats Tioga, Meta, Cornet and Huntsville, and also the prize steamer Cumberland, captured a few days previous by the gunboat De Soto.

The Cumberland has a very valuable cargo, consisting of arms, ammunition, &c., and when captured was on her way from Havana to Mobile.

The McClellan brings a mail and the following passengers:—

Capt. Grow, Lieuts. Mathias, Stackhouse, W. S. Herewerth, Jas. H. Stewart, James Reilly and Peter M. Collins, and Capt. John B. Collins, all of the Ninety-first New York Volunteers; Ensign Jones, U. S. N., and eleven in the steerage.

Our Key West Correspondence.

KEY WEST, Fla., Feb. 11, 1864.

For some months past, as the readers of the HERALD are doubtless aware, an English steamer had been lying in Havana waiting for a favorable opportunity to run the blockade. Her name is the Cumberland. What added to the interest felt in this vessel was the impression that should she succeed in getting into a rebel port with her valuable cargo she would be fitted out as a privateer, and issue forth for the purpose of preying on our commerce, after the manner of the Alabama, Florida and other Southern rovers. To this end it was alleged that the Cumberland had a formidable armament on board, furnished by some accommodating British firm, of the Laird Lindsay stripe, ready to be mounted as soon as her cargo was discharged in Mobile or some other port in Rebeldom. Under such circumstances a strict watch was kept on the Cumberland, and information of her doings was from time to time transmitted from Havana to Rear Admiral Bailey, commanding the East Gulf squadron at this station, and that indefatigable officer issued a general order for all the vessels belonging to the squadron to be on the alert for the would-be privateer.

Not for one moment was the vigilant surveillance by the blockading vessels relaxed. Everything consistent with international comity and the rights of neutrals was done to prevent the Cumberland from giving our blockaders the slip and depriving our gallant tars of one of the richest prizes of the present war, when, lo! two weeks and a half ago, the portentous news reached this place:—"The Cumberland has escaped from Havana." But while this unpalatable morsel was being digested by some, and others were "chewing the cud of reflection" thereon, as Smollet hath it, the loyal folks of this little island had their hearts cheered by the intelligence that the United States steamer De Soto, Captain Scott, had just arrived, and that the Cumberland, captured by her, was close behind. This was on Monday last, and, sure enough, two or three hours after, the Cumberland herself, in charge of Acting Master L. H. Partridge, as prize master, was seen coming through the northwest passage, whither she had been convoyed by the De Soto, in consequence of the valuable cargo on board, while the De Soto herself, from her great draught of water, came through the ship channel. Much adroitness seems to have been exercised by Captain Scott, and considerable ingenuity manifested in leaving the coast clear for the Cumberland to run out of Havana and then falling in with her at the right time and in the right spot to make her easy prey. To those who can see deeply into a millstone, I leave the putting of this and that together, and arriving at a correct solution of the *modus operandi* by which the whole delicate transaction was carried out.

Of the capture itself I have nothing of an exciting nature to record. There was no long stern chase; no waste of "villanous saltpetre;" no screaming of shot and shell. The whole affair was conducted in the most prosaic, commonplace manner, and did not differ from the most ordinary capture of a ten ton sloop, laden with physic and notions. What matter? Some seven hundred thousand dollars worth in gold changed hands in the space of a few minutes, to the profit of Uncle Sam and his handy mariners. The main chance being secure, the romance can be dispensed with. But to the record.

On the 5th of February, as the Cumberland was making the best of her way towards Mobile, her captain and passengers felicitating themselves on the speedy termination of a prosperous run, with large profits looming up in perspective, a check was suddenly put to their gayety by the appearance of the much dreaded enemy. At the time she was sighted from the deck of the De Soto, about half-past eight o'clock in the morning, the Cumberland was in 29 deg. 40 min. north latitude and 87 deg. 30 min. west longitude. On sighting her the De Soto immediately gave chase, and was soon running at the rate of twelve and a half knots, gaining on the Cumberland (which the stranger was known to be) very fast, although she had been reported as a fifteen knot vessel. At twenty minutes past ten the Cumberland was under the guns of the De Soto, from which a boat was hoisted to board the prize. Captain Blakeney, commanding the Cumberland, together with her officers and crew, were then transferred to the De Soto, when a prize crew of twenty-seven men and two engineers, commanded by Acting Master Partridge, were sent from the cruiser to the Cumberland, and she was brought into this port under convoy of the De Soto, as already mentioned.

The cargo of the Cumberland is a well assorted one and very valuable. Among other things found on board were one hundred barrels of gunpowder and a large number of Enfield rifles. She has also in her hold a very large quantity of fine gray rebel uniform cloth and bales upon bales of superior navy blue, besides an immense number of ready made rebel uniforms, boots and shoes—in short, everything necessary for the outfit of both sea and land forces. I have it on good authority that the cargo cost seventy thousand pounds in gold in England; that the ship was sold there for fifty thousand pounds, and that ten thousand pounds more were expended on her in Havana. The cargo has not yet been disturbed, and it is therefore impossible to tell whether there are any cannon in the hold, and the captain and passengers, of course, keep dark on the subject; although, as the captain was engaged only in Havana, and most of the passengers are from that place, it is just possible that they know nothing about the matter.

It is said that Captain Blakeney received no less a sum than twelve thousand dollars in advance to venture the run. He frankly owns that he is a New Yorker; therefore I need not say that he was too shrewd to carry so much loose coin about him, under the circumstances, always supposing he had it. In fact, the passengers, who are mostly Englishmen, as well as the captain, seem to have cut their eye teeth for not one dollar of the "filthy lucre" was found on any of them. Perhaps they are old rats, and "know trap." The captain is, at any rate, for this is the second time he has been brought up with a round turn while engaged in the blockade running business. He takes things as philosophically as gentlemen of his genus generally do. The passengers are equally unconcerned, apparently, about the matter. Several of them are stopping at the Russell House; so I have had an opportunity of knowing their names, through the register. Among them is a gentleman of whom I have often heard, but whom I never knew, namely, the illustrious John Snooks, Esq., whose residence is in the cheerful locality of the North Pole, so he says, under his own signature.

While the Cumberland lay in Havana the De Soto was a frequent visitor there. The officers and crews of the two vessels used to meet frequently, and lots of chaff were wont to pass between them over their grog—the Cumberland's declaring, of course, that the De Soto could never catch their vessel, while the De Soto's, who knew the qualities of their craft, would turn their quids, and, in the rollicking manner peculiar to the sons of Neptune, intimate their intention of trying. They have done so, and succeeded, and the De Soto has earned another title to be considered the crack vessel for speed of the East Gulf squadron. So well was it understood that there was to be a contest of speed between the two vessels, if circumstances favored it, that on Mr Partridge, the boarding officer, hailing Captain Blakeney from alongside, the latter cared in immediately, and owned himself beaten.

The De Soto, by the way, left on Tuesday evening, in search, as is said, of another blockade-running steamer, called the Alice—a vessel that is said to be extremely swift, and as fortunate as swift. The Cumberland is an iron side-wheel steamer, about seventeen years old. She is two hundred and twenty-eight [?] in length, and is supposed to have been built on the Thames. Her rig is that of a fore and aft schooner. She is propelled by two oscillating engines, built by Todd & McGregor, Glasgow. Her shafts are sixty inches in diameter, with a sixty inch stroke, fitted with feather bucket wheels and new boilers—in fact, the entire machinery is new, though the vessel is old. She bears the reputation of being a good sea boat. Originally the property of the North of England Steam Navigation Company, she was sold for the purpose of running the blockade, with the ulterior purpose, perhaps, of being fitted out as a privateer. Her cargo was owned by Messrs. Swift, La Fontaine, Adams and Sullivan, passengers on board.

I was not aware till I had written thus far that Capt. Blakeney was arrested last evening, by order of Admiral Bailey, and sent on board the Dale, the flagship during the absence of the San Jacinto. The Cumberland will leave for New York in a few days.

Another pleasant little piece of intelligence has just reached me—namely, that a most elegant and costly set of parlor furniture, in papiermache, suitable for an "illustrious and honored President," has been found on board the Cumberland. It was intended as a present to Jeff. Davis from his admirers in England; but, alas, it has fallen into the hands of the Philistines. Another set, intended for ex-Senator Mallory, of this place, the rebel Secretary of War, was also found on board. Would it not be poetical justice for the friends of President Lincoln to purchase the set intended for Jeff. Davis and present it to Uncle Abe? The other set might be presented to General Grant.

But the Cumberland is not the only prize that has been captured since my last. On the 31st ult. the schooner Beauregard made a prize off Cape Canaveral of the British sloop Rain, bound from New Smyrna, Florida, to Nassau, with twenty bales of sea island cotton.

News has been received from the military expedition sent over to the mainland. On Tuesday morning, the 2d inst., Capt. Crane and Lieutenant Dening started from Fort Meyers, in Charlotte's Harbor, to Denaud, on the mainland, with forty men, where our force had a picket of four men, who were attacked by a force of forty-five cowboys, mounted as irregular cavalry. One of our pickets fired, to give the alarm, when the fire was returned, slightly wounding one of the pickets—a refugee, named Whitton. The pickets were driven in a short distance, when the forty men from the fort came up and drove back the rebels, following them up all night. Next morning the small Union force drew up in line of battle, fired a volley and made a charge on the rebels, completely routing them and driving them back like a flock of sheep quite out of sight.

The United States steamer Metacomet arrived here on the 4th instant, from the West India station. Off Abaco she ran into the gunboat Tioga, on the night of the 2d instant, damaging one of her paddle wheels considerably. The Tioga is in here for the purpose of undergoing repairs. The following is a list of the officers of the Metacomet:—

Lieutenant Commander—James E. Jouett.
Acting Masters—Henry J. Sleeper and C. W. Wilson.
Assistant Surgeon—E. D. Payne.
Acting Assistant Paymaster—Horace M. Haviman.
Acting Ensigns—George E. Wing, J. C. Morse and John White.
Acting Master's Mates—C. C. Jones, J. K. Goodwin and R. M. Miller.
Engineers—Acting First Assistant, James Atkins; Acting Third Assistants, George B. Rodgers, James H. Nash, S. W. King, Samuel Fowler and C. H. Hunt.
Acting Gunner—Peter McGovern
Acting Paymaster's Clerk—George C. Heath.
Acting Captain's Clerk—Jessee T. Lee.
Acting Surgeon's Steward—L. D. Montague.
Acting Paymaster's Steward—Edward Van Buskirk.

MILITARY AFFAIRS.

Reception of the First New York Cavalry.

This veteran regiment of cavalry—the first mounted men received into the service during the war—having re-enlisted for three years longer, and being now at home on thirty days' furlough, will to-day receive the hospitalities of the city. For the first time the city authorities have made arrangements to give our war-worn fellow-townsmen a befitting reception, as will be seen from the programme, published in another column. At two o'clock this afternoon, the regiment will be received by the Mayor and Common Council, in front of the City Hall. The regiment will next proceed up Broadway to Eighth street, thence to Jefferson Market, where a sumptuous collation will be provided for them by the city authorities. The Seventh regiment, National Guard, have volunteered their services as an escort, and will accompany the cavalry on its line of march. The cavalry will parade, dismounted, having left their horses in the field for the use of the regiments which relieved it from its arduous duties in the Shenandoah Valley. The First New York cavalry formerly numbered one thousand four hundred men, nearly all of whom enlisted from this city; now less than five hundred respond at roll call. Of this poor remnant four hundred and twenty-five have re-enlisted for a second term. Colonel McReynolds, who is in command, will make every effort during the brief furlough granted the regiment to fill its ranks. The reception to-day will, doubtless, be a grand one.

The Second Corps.

Recruiting for this gallant corps, under the stimulus imparted by the presence and exertions of its commandant, Major General W. S. Hancock, is progressing rapidly. The Major General has devoted the entire of his time while in this city to the work of perfecting the recruiting organization. The leading merchants of the Stock and Corn Exchanges have contributed freely, while the Union League has not only aided with money, but by the diligent personal efforts of its individual members.

The following communication, addressed to Brigadier Gen. William Hays, requesting that Col. Robert Nugent be appointed to represent the corps at the headquarters in this city, has been cheerfully acceded to by the Acting Assistant Provost Marshal General:—

ST. JAMES HOTEL, NEW YORK, Feb. 13, 1864.

MY DEAR GENERAL—It is my desire that, under General Barlow, and without interfering with you, Colonel Nugent shall represent me in this city, and