THE NEW YORK HERALD.

WHOLE NO. 10,358. NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 1865. PRICE FOUR CENTS.

THE SOUTH.

THE REBEL OPPOSITION PARTY.

The Anti-Jeff. Davis Faction in the South Growing Stronger and Bolder.

The Opposition Press Accused of Destroying Confidence, Preventing Enlistments and Encouraging Desertion.

REBEL CONTEMPT FOR ENGLAND.

She is Impotent to Even Break Up the Blockade of the Rebel Ports.

EXPLAINING AWAY HOOD'S DEFEAT.

General Sherman's Capture of Hardeeville, S. C.

Hood Reports His Army South of the Tennessee, &c., &c., &c.

Ex-Congressman John H. Gilmer, of Virginia, now a States' rights rebel, publishes in the Richmond Whig, January 4, a long letter on the "position and duties of Virginia in the existing state of political matters." It fills three columns of the Whig, and is very verbose. He favors State action and interposition in bringing about peace, and argues that Virginia is at liberty to take such action without consultation with the rest of the confederacy. He declares against the emancipation of slaves in the army, and says "Confederate emancipation is worse than federal or coerced emancipation."

The Anti-Jeff. Davis Press.

THEIR REBEL ANTI-ADMINISTRATION ORGANS DESTROYING CONFIDENCE, PREVENTING ENLISTMENTS AND STIMULATING DESERTION.

[From the Richmond Sentinel (administration organ), Jan. 4.]

How comes it that we meet with so many gloomy and despondent individuals, at a time when there is nothing in the posture of our affairs to justify such gloom and despondency? The enemy, after the most vigorous, and, on their part, far the most bloody campaign of the war, do not occupy half as much of the Confederate territory as they held a year ago. Their currency has depreciated and their debt increased much more rapidly than during any other year of the war. They are almost entirely cut off from supplies of gold from California, and without gold they cannot sustain the war. Their men fight only for money, for specie or its equivalent; ours for liberty and independence. We could carry on the war without money. They must cease to fight when money fails, and fall them it will as soon as all confidence is lost in their paper currency. The depreciation of that currency during the past year leaves no room for doubt that the day is not very distant when it will no longer subserve the purpose of buying up the million of mercenaries required for the prosecution of this war. *It is true that the depreciation of their currency does not proceed so rapidly as we hoped and expected;* but it is going on fast enough to satisfy every considerate man that the day of their national bankruptcy is not far distant. A bankrupt nation cannot carry on a great and costly war; but bankruptcy, national and individual, spares not the moment courage, thirst of revenge and desperation, a people fighting, as we do, for property, life, liberty and independence.

Should they put a larger army into the field the present year than in any former year, it will but increase their debt the more rapidly, and hasten on their bankruptcy. Even without such larger army their debt is increasing in geometrical ratio; for food, ammunition, clothing and all the expenses of outfitting and sustaining an army, are more than double what they were when the war began. Indeed, it would be nearer the truth to say that the average prices at the North are now three times as great as when hostilities commenced, and these prices are daily rising, as their currency depreciates and their debt increases. Nobody now volunteers at the North, and to purchase the enlistment of soldiers will cost them more this year than any year heretofore. Besides, the interest of their debt is not paid by them, but a great part of it is annually converted into principal.

All of these considerations are obvious enough to everybody, and should inspire hope, confidence and cheerfulness. That they do not do so is entirely *owing to the gross misrepresentations of a panic making opposition,* who, by continually decrying the administration and the generals and other officers appointed by the administration, *have succeeded in some degree in destroying confidence in its wisdom and efficiency, prevented enlistment and stimulated desertion from the ranks of our armies.* They daily and hourly tell the people (in effect), through the press by paid letter writers and in conversation, *that the President is weak, obstinate, capricious,* and wholly incapable of performing the duties of his office; *that his cabinet are imbeciles;* and that the officers of the army whom he appoints are wholly unfitted for their commands.

Having to fight the Yankees, encouraged, abetted and aided by these false, malignant and treacherous panic makers and slanderers within our own ranks, the success of our own arms is truly wonderful. That continued success should give assurance to the people, that with such men as we have had at the head of affairs, State and Confederate, since the war began, we can and will win independence, despite of federal arms, though insidiously and industriously encouraged and aided by intestine folly and treachery. Enough men will enlist in our armies, and remain in the ranks, to secure the ultimate, though tardy, triumph of our arms, despite the tendency of a panic making opposition to prevent such enlistments and to encourage desertion. They may, and will, delay our triumphal success, but cannot altogether prevent it.

Abuse, villify, misrepresent and slander the officers of our army, because they are all the appointees of the President, as they may, those officers will continue to secure and maintain the confidence of all good soldiers, of all honest and pure patriots, and to excite the admiration and applause of whatever is respectable throughout Christendom. For nearly four years has Europe looked on with impartial eye at the conduct of affairs, civil and military, in our confederacy, and pronounced, with singular unanimity, the opinion that never were such affairs managed with more ability, more wisdom, more patriotic devotion, more courage, or with more success, against such fearful odds.

Let the people cheer up and no longer heed the slanders of the opposition panic makers.

The Impotence of England.

THE NORTH HOLDING HER IN CONTEMPT AND THE REBELS REGARDING HER WITH DISGUST.

[From the Richmond Whig, Jan. 4.]

Three of our contemporaries seem to be engaged in a controversy as to whether it would or would not be better to return as colonists to Great Britain than to submit to the Yankees. We have not paid to this controversy a tithe of attention which we usually accord to the suggestions of our neighbors, for the simple reason that we can conceive of nothing more unprofitable at this moment, and in our circumstances. *England cannot recolonize us if she would, and we think it pretty certain that she would not if she could.* In the beginning of this war if she had recognized us, as she should have done, and declared her determination to compel a strict observance of the rules of blockade, laid down by herself in Paris, and subscribed by all the maritime Powers of Europe, she might easily have put an end to the struggle before it had been six months old. The Yankees, at that time held her in mortal terror. They were ignorant of their own strength, and held that of England in an awe approaching superstition. She might have dictated her own terms, and they would have subscribed to them without hesitation. But Yankeedom has now a more undue opinion of its own strength, and a contempt for *the strength of England,* warranted only by the cowardly policy her Cabinet has thought fit to pursue. Any interference of England would be resented as an insult, as *she has not the power to enforce any line of hostile policy they may adopt.* She has allowed the Yankees to pen their own coasts into such a state of defence as to render them unassailable by her fleets. She has no ships that would encounter the Yankee monitors with any prospect of success; and, although it is easy enough for her to build such, yet the probability is that they would not be able to cross the ocean. Monitors are made for coast defence, and not for ocean navigation. *She could not, then, in all probability, even break up the blockade of our ports, for she would send an army* and fleet here to assist us in driving away the Yankees, preparatory to returning to colonial vassalage. We think it, therefore, hardly worth while to inquire into the expediency of returning to the arms of Old England, seeing Old England could not receive us if she would. We must fight it out with the Yankees. The alternative presented is death or slavery. We hope our people have not yet come to that point that they hesitate in their choice.

Great Britain has been guilty of a great blunder in overlooking the claims of the confederacy to her notice, and in truckling as she has done to the Yankees. She has neglected an opportunity of certainly humbling the most formidable rival that she has in the world, and has thrown upon us the entire burden of a war in which she is quite as much interested as we. If the Yankees could succeed in subjugating us the doom of Great Britain would be sealed. Before the year 1900 she would have lost all her ships and all her colonies. Ireland would be torn from her grasp, and the knight tremble for her supremacy even in England itself. She cannot stield the war which Yankeedom is determined to force upon her, by yielding and grovelling. That is not the way to preserve peace. That is not the way that Napoleon III. prevents all Europe, in a body, from falling upon him. He is always ready to strike, and it is for this reason that he seldom has occasion to do it. So far from taking to heel on colonists, with the commencement of such a war as we should bring along with us, England, if the correspondent of the London Times be worthy of notice, is ready to give up Canada as soon as the Yankees make a formal demand. The Confederate States alone have the courage to face the whole power of Yankeedom. It seems more as though England should lay down on our colony than that we should cower before her.

The Destruction of the Virginia Salines.

[From the Lynchburg Virginian.]

BALCOVILLE, Dec. 28, 1864.

Maj. Gen. Gabriel Rhett, Commanding Post:—

General—We, the undersigned, having been appointed by you to examine the various furnaces at this place and make an estimate of the amount of salt on hand, had also to state the condition of the works as left by the enemy on the 23d instant, respectfully report the following:—

We find the wells not seriously damaged. Mr. Manguhitte, the machinist in charge, thinks they may be put in full operation in less than one month. All the pipe lost, cisterns, &c., are uninjured. As to the furnaces, the masonry remains as it was, but the sheds are all destroyed by fire. We find, by actual count, 1,820 good kettles, and 783 broken by the enemy, the North Carolina, Georgia and River Works (State of Virginia) suffering about the entire loss.

We find the entire amount of salt at the furnaces to be about 22,000 bushels, damaged slightly by fire.

Of this salt, [illegible] belong to Hearn, Buchanan & Co., manufacturers for North Carolina; 17,000 bushels to McClungs & Jenkins, for Tennessee and Alabama; 1,000 bushels to J. W. Cockburn, for State of Virginia; 2,000 bushels to State of North Carolina; 2,000 bushels to Bigham & Cox, Georgia; 4,000 bushels to Sage, Palmer & Co., Georgia; 2,000 bushels to Planters' Salt Manufactory, Georgia; 1,000 bushels to Thomas R. Friend; 2,000 bushels to State of Alabama; 2,000 bushels to Cox, Auman & Sexton; 2,000 bushels to R. Goolsby & Co.

The remainder belongs to numerous small furnaces, worked on private account. Very respectfully, your obedient servants, J. D. PIERCE,

Colonel in charge of Saltville Defences.

SAMUEL L. GRAHAM,

Captain Comp'ny Co. K, 15th Reg. Virginia Reserves.

Approved—R. Rhett, Lieutenant Colonel, Commanding Saltville.

Lively Artillery Duel at Newbern's Mouse.

[From the Richmond Enquirer, Jan. 4.]

A lively artillery engagement took place yesterday forenoon between the Howlett batteries and the batteries of the enemy on the north side, nearly opposite. The results were inconsiderable. Beyond this demonstration nothing of interest transpired on the lines.

Narrow Escape of General Torbert from Capture.

[From the Richmond Enquirer, Jan. 4.]

General Torbert, the Yankee who recently did not capture Gordonsville, narrowly escaped capture himself near Warrenton, on his retreat. He stopped at the house of some acquaintance, and while he was on his way to rejoin his command a party of Mosby's men made a sudden descent upon him. Unluckily, they only ordered him to halt, instead of taking him at once, thus giving him time to get well ahead of them. Instead of halting Torbert put spurs to his horse, and, although his pursuers fired several shots at him, he escaped apparently unhurt.

Explaining Away Hood's Disaster.

[From the Richmond Whig, Jan. 2.]

The fact that the Yankees have, during the past two days, refused to exchange papers, gave an impetus to a rumor current yesterday at noon, that Hood, having turned upon Thomas, had whipped him badly, killing three thousand and taking six thousand prisoners. There was no official confirmation of the rumor.

Thomas Conscripting the Tennesseans and Calling Them Prisoners.

[From the Richmond Dispatch, Jan. 2.]

A gentleman who has arrived in this city from the vicinity of Columbia, Tenn., states that since General Hood entered Tennessee he has recruited his army largely, and has driven northward over ten thousand hogs and some six thousand beef cattle. He also secured a large quantity of flour and corn—enough to last his army at least three months. In order to secure his retreat across Duck river he had posted some twelve or fourteen cannon to keep the river clear. He crossed his main force, when the enemy attacked his rearguard, and they were unable to bring off the pieces.

General Hood conscripted all able bodied males from sixteen to fifty years of age; and when he retreated the Yankees seized all they could find between these ages to swell their list of prisoners, and they were included in the nine thousand prisoners claimed by the Yankee General Thomas.

Butler and the Dutch Gap Canal.

[From the Richmond Whig, Jan. 2.]

Beast Butler tried, to his discomfiture, the opening of the Dutch Gap canal, and based his waning military reputation upon its speedy completion. Finding, however, that it was like his Drewry's Bluff operation—a complete failure—he prudently embarked, just before the election, to New York, to do the bidding of his master Abraham, and became, in republican circles, the chief military dignitary of the great Yankee metropolis. He said to one go, and he went, and to another, come, and he came. Lincoln being elected, his work was completed, and as a reward for his services he was sent with a grand armada, with all the powers of a Satrap, for the capture of Wilmington. He got on a swimmingly until he reached Newbern, where he made a speech, and stated that he would, without fail, eat his Christmas dinner in Wilmington. From thence he went forward with more colors flying and in more pomp than the Duke of Parma ever dreamed of. On reaching Wilmington, however, he met with so hospitable a reception at the hands of General Whiting and Colonel Lamb that he found it prudent to put to sea, and, in the memorable language once used by a great and good man, may now appropriately ask, where shall I go? Our answer would be, not again to Wilmington.

Apropos to the movements of Butler, we learned on Saturday evening that his pet canal across Dutch Gap has been filled up. If so, the query arises whether "the ditch" has been filled with sand or Yankees, ready to be slaughtered. This is rather an important question, as the Confederate soldiers in front of "the Gap" only want to know the number of the Yankees in that locality, and the time when they will show their heads above ground, in order to give them a quietus.

The Rebel Railroads.

A CHANGE IN THE SOUTHERN RAILROAD SYSTEM NECESSARY.

[From the Richmond Sentinel, Jan. 4.]

The occupation of Savannah renders very desirable some modification of our railroad system in South Carolina and Georgia.

The railroad line from Wilmington to Augusta makes a detour at Branchville precisely in the wrong direction, because towards the coast. From Kingsville, by Columbia, to Augusta, would be no further than by Branchville to Augusta, and would give a much safer line. Cannot the link between Columbia and Augusta be put in? The distance, as measured on the map, is about seventy-five miles. The railroad as it stands, however, is, from Augusta to Aiken's, almost in a direct line to Columbia. Making Aiken's a point of junction, would shorten the distance seventeen miles, or reduce the whole, say to sixty miles. We should thus have a safe, direct line from Augusta to Columbia, where a choice of roads leading hitherward would be had by Wilmington or Charlotte and Danville.

Still higher up is Abbeville, which is in railroad connection with Columbia; and opposite to it in Georgia is Athens, which is in connection with the Augusta and Atlanta Railroad. These points are by the map about sixty-five miles apart. If they, too, were connected, we should have another and a more interior line between Georgia and the Eastern States.

It should be an object to remove the superstructure of railroads no longer serviceable, and employ the materials upon connections adapted to the changed state of affairs. Large portions of the railroads leading to Savannah are now unserviceable, and, indeed, can be of advantage only to the enemy. Other railroads are, or may become, in like condition. We should be as studious to dismantle these as to bring off the baggage train of an army; nay more so. Slaves ought to be impressed in sufficient numbers to complete with despatch the new connections which become eligible. If we construct these with judgment and in time, it will not be in the power of the enemy to cripple our communications.

Repairing the Georgia State Railroads.

[From the Richmond Sentinel, Jan. 4.]

The track of this road is not as badly damaged as at first reported. From Stone Mountain to Lithonia the road is in good running order, says the Augusta *Chronicle,* with the exception of about one mile, which General Slocum's corps destroyed after leaving the main army, in their route to the east side of Yellow river. From the Alcova down to Oconee it is only tapped occasionally, and can easily be repaired.

The Latest Rebel News.

THE CAPTURE OF HARDEEVILLE BY SHERMAN'S TROOPS.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 6, 1864.

The Richmond *Despatch* of Thursday, the 5th, has been received. It was heretofore announced that Sherman had driven in the rebel pickets at Hardeeville, which is thus described by that paper:—

Hardeeville is a station on the Charleston and Savannah Railroad, twenty miles from Savannah. Sherman's present objective point is Branchville, the point of junction on the Charleston and Savannah, with the Augusta Railroad. We have heard no estimate of his force, but presume he has been reinforced by Foster's command from Port Royal, and perhaps by all the Yankee troops from Morris Island and thereabouts.

THE FORT FISHER EXPEDITION.

WILMINGTON, Jan. 4, 1865.

Late news from Newbern and Beaufort reports that Butler's army and Porter's fleet have gone to Hampton Roads, or, perhaps, to City Point. Only 1,000 troops are at Beaufort still. It was reported at Newbern that the Yankees lost five vessels sunk and fifteen disabled, all their heavy armament and much ammunition, in the late gale. Only the disabled vessels were left at Beaufort.

GENERAL HOOD'S ARMY REPORTED SOUTH OF THE TENNESSEE.

An official despatch from General Hood, dated Corinth, December 30, was received at the War Department last night. General Hood states that the army has crossed the Tennessee river without material loss since the battle in front of Nashville.

THE DEATH OF GENERAL PRICE.

JACKSON, Miss., Dec. 19, 1864.

Major Watson, just from Shreveport, reports the death of Major General Price at Dooley's ferry, Lafayette county, Ark., on the 1st inst., of apoplexy.

MOVEMENTS OF CAPTAIN SEMMES.

This gallant and distinguished officer, commander of the famous Alabama, arrived at Jackson, Miss., on the 19th ult. He is in fine health and spirits, and expresses the opinion that the war will soon end. He came via Texas, and is accompanied by his son. We may expect him in Richmond this week.

GENERAL RIPLEY.

The *Dispatch* also has the following:—

General R. S. Ripley has been relieved of the army of the Tennessee.

THE GEORGIA MILITIA.

The Georgia militia, after nobly sustaining the State, passed through Augusta on the 28th of December.

RICHMOND.

Review of General Miles' Division, Second Corps, &c., &c., &c.

THE SECOND CORPS.

Mr. William J. Slavin's Despatch.

HEADQUARTERS, SECOND ARMY CORPS, BEFORE PETERSBURG, Jan. 3, 1865.

REVIEW OF GENERAL MILES' DIVISION.

The First division, Brevet Major General Nelson A. Miles commanding, was reviewed by General Humphreys this afternoon. This is one of the largest divisions in the army, and its appearance was in the highest degree creditable to both officers and men. A large number of the general and other officers of the corps were present, and were pleasantly entertained at General Miles' headquarters after the ceremonies were over.

Loud and long continued cheering was heard from the rebels this evening, doubtless incited by the news from Wilmington.

SNOW.

A heavy snow storm set in at an early hour this afternoon, and bids fair to continue some length of time.

THE FIFTH CORPS.

Mr. L. A. Hendrick's Despatches.

HEADQUARTERS, FIFTH ARMY CORPS, BEFORE PETERSBURG, Jan. 2, 1865.

SWORD PRESENTATION TO BRIGADIER GENERAL BAXTER.

This evening a large convocation of officers, principally from the brigade, is assembled at the headquarters of Brigadier General Baxter, commanding the Second brigade, Third division, to witness the presentation to him of a sword, sash and belt. It is one of the finest swords ever presented in the army, and was paid for by the officers exclusively of the brigade. I need not describe it at length, except that, in addition to the most elaborate gold decorations, the hilt is elaborately studded with diamonds and other precious stones. Brevet Brigadier General Coulter made the presentation speech in handsome style, to which General Baxter most feelingly and eloquently responded. Major General Warren subsequently made a speech, which for felicitousness of sentiment and utterance is rarely equalled. Not to mention the splendid dinner accompanying the presentation would be to omit an important part of the programme. A band of music was of course present to add enlivening interest to the occasion.

HEADQUARTERS, FIFTH ARMY CORPS, BEFORE PETERSBURG, Jan. 3, 1865.

The excitement of New Year's calling is over, and army life has subsided into its usual monotony. Following up the late weather variations, the sunshine of yesterday has given way to a snow storm to-day, which probably will turn into rain and mud.

GENERAL WARREN ON LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

Major General Warren left to-day on fifteen days leave. In his absence the corps will be commanded by Brevet Major Gen. Crawford. Among other recent departures on leave are Brevet Colonel Bankhead, Corps Inspector General; Dr. DeWitt, Surgeon-in-Chief, First division; Brevet Major Belcher and Captain Winslow, of General Bartlett's staff; Lieutenant Suter, Corps Commissary; Lieutenant Clarke, Corps Signal officer; Major Baird, Assistant Adjutant General Third division, and Lieutenant Knaggs of Brigadier General Baxter's staff.

RESIGNATION OF COLONEL THROOP AND MAJOR MONTEITH.

Two officers have just severed their connection with this corps and army, whose abandonment of military life is universally lamented, Brevet Colonel Throop, First Michigan regiment, and—Brevet Major Monteith, late Assistant Adjutant General of the First division. Colonel Throop came out as second lieutenant of the First Michigan regiment at the commencement of the war, and rose to the command of the regiment through gallantry and meritorious conduct in the field, having never missed a battle in which his regiment participated. Brevet Major Monteith entered the service as first lieutenant in the Sixteenth Michigan regiment. For a time he was Post Adjutant under Major General Sherman, and subsequently General Fitz John Porter selected him as one of his staff officers, which position he held until the latter left the service. A more valuable, energetic and conscientious officer the present war has not developed.

BUTLER'S HEADQUARTERS.

Mr. William H. Merriam's Despatch.

IN FRONT OF RICHMOND, Jan. 3, 1865.

Major General Butler, accompanied by Brevet Major General Terry, and Senator Clark, of New Hampshire, visited Lieutenant General Grant yesterday, returning early in the day, save Senator Clark, who visited the New Hampshire regiments late last evening.

THE FIRING AT DUTCH GAP.

There was considerable firing upon Dutch Gap yesterday; but nobody was hurt, inasmuch as there was nobody there to be hurt. One of the enemy's shot passed directly through the entire length of the canal.

DISMISSED.

Second Lieutenant Heber Carroll, Sixteenth New York, is dishonorably dismissed the service of the United States, in general orders, for conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman, neglect of duty, and straggling and misbehavior in face of the enemy.

THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT AND THE TROOPS.

On the recommendation of Surgeon J. J. Craven, M. D., late Acting Medical Director of this department and army, an extra half ration of coffee and sugar will hereafter be issued daily to the troops of this command, at reveille, when turned out in compliance with certain general orders.

GUERILLAS ON THE UPPER POTOMAC.

Our Pickets and Camp Fired Upon—A Mail Carrier Shot by the Guerillas—Capture of a Number of Bushwhackers Near Poolesville, &c.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 6, 1864.

Major Andrews, who commands the guard picketing the Potomac river from the Great Falls to the mouth of the Monocacy, says that the guerillas who infest the banks of the river there have become very troublesome of late, and that hardly a night passes without their firing upon our pickets or making an attempt to cross the river at some point or other.

On Monday night while the mail carrier of Major Andrews' command was conveying a mail from the camp to Poolesville he was fired upon from the Virginia shore, and a ball passed through his head, shattering it in a frightful manner.

On the same night the camp of the First Delaware cavalry was fired upon by bushwhackers on this side of the river, who appear to be operating with the guerilla White, by signalling to him from the Maryland side, in the neighborhood of Rockville.

On Wednesday night a party of rebels, numbering fifteen, crossed the Potomac on a raft, in the vicinity of Poolesville. They were evidently very hungry, for they were on a chicken stealing expedition, and they managed to get some eight miles from the river before they were discovered. They were then pursued and finally overhauled and ten of them taken prisoners.

The Indiana Legislature.

INDIANAPOLIS, Jan. 6, 1865.

The Governor's Message was delivered to-day to the Legislature in joint convention. The message was very long, relating principally to State affairs. The number of soldiers furnished from Indiana is over 165,000.

SHERMAN.

The Union Army Being Reorganized and Re-equipped for Another Grand Campaign.

Further Rebel Accounts of the Evacuation of Savannah.

GENERAL SHERMAN IN A NEW CHARACTER

He Endeavors to Conciliate Rebels, &c., &c., &c.

The Press Despatch.

FORTRESS MONROE, Jan. 5, 1865.

The steamer California arrived here this afternoon, from Hilton Head, South Carolina, with Colonel Ewing on board, bearer of important despatches from General Sherman.

General Sherman's army, since the capture of Savannah, had been quietly resting upon their laurels, and no aggressive movement had as yet been undertaken. General Kilpatrick, with his cavalry, was constantly on the scout, keeping a wakeful eye over Hardee's forces. The army was rapidly recovering from the effects of its long and fatiguing march through Georgia, and was being reorganized and re-equipped, preparatory, it is said, to the commencement of a campaign which would be as memorable as its last great exploit.

THE REBEL ACCOUNTS.

The Rebel Evacuation of Savannah.

INTERESTING REBEL ACCOUNT OF THE MOVEMENTS OF HARDEE.

[Correspondence of the Charleston Courier.]

Our fortifications extended from the Savannah river, some four miles above the city, on our right, to the Little Ogeechee river, near the Gulf Railroad, some eight miles from the city, on our left. We held Fort McAllister, on the west bank of the Ogeechee, a few miles below the Gulf Railroad. We had also strong batteries at Rose Dew, between the two Ogeechees, at Beaulieu, Thunderbolt, Cobbin's Bluff, &c., and troops stationed on Isle of Hope and Whitmarsh Islands. Our newly erected fortifications on the land side of the city were very strong and capable of turning back almost any kind of assault, though they were not commenced till after Sherman had nearly reached Milledgeville. Sherman's army appeared before these works about the 8th or 9th instant, and on Saturday, the 10th, considerable fighting occurred. Several severe assaults were made, in which the enemy were signally repulsed. Early on Sunday morning, the 11th, a tremendous cannonading began and was kept up for half the day. It was supposed in the city that a heavy engagement was going on, but it proved to be only a general shelling from the heavy guns on our lines. Sherman was in no condition to attack our works. He was scarce of ammunition and had no heavy guns, as well as other difficulties in the way of his giving battle. During the siege severe assaults were several times made on particular points, with a view of storming our works and breaking through our lines, but all these were handsomely repulsed.

On Saturday, the 17th instant, a flag of truce was sent in by Sherman, demanding the surrender of the city; and on Sunday, the 18th, a reply was given by General Beauregard, refusing to comply with the demand. On Monday the evacuation commenced—the first squad crossing out about mid-day; another came out at four P. M., and two others at night. How rapidly the evacuation was thereafter conducted I know not, except from reports. It is said the evacuation took place on Tuesday night. I fear all our soldiers did not get out. Some of them were twelve or fourteen miles from the city, while many were eight miles off. The heaviest fighting of the siege took place on Monday evening and night, the 19th. The enemy were repulsed in all their attempts on our lines; so the soldiers must have been there, and not on the retreat. If so, I cannot perceive how it is possible for all to have come off by Tuesday night, though they may have done so. We had several boats, capable of carrying from five hundred to one thousand each across the river at a trip, and a pontoon bridge besides.

Very few of the citizens left the city. Many would have done so if they could, but the realization of their condition came too late. It found them all unprepared, and escape impossible. There was no alternative but to submit to their terrible fate. It does seem to me that our military authorities should, by some means, have given some notice or hint to the people, or time allowed those who desired to do so either to get away or set their houses in order if they intended to stay. Perhaps I am wrong in this conclusion; I will not say, positively. As before stated, the people were in the dark as to what was going on. They hoped we would be able to force Sherman to the coast, either to the right or to the left, and save the city, and in this belief very little private property of any description was sent off. Neither of the newspaper offices were removed, and all the material of both—including a considerable supply of paper—fell into the hands of the enemy. If they remain there long, we may expect soon to have them issuing Yankee newspapers from the offices of those hitherto substantial Southern journals.

The last issue of the *News* was on Saturday morning, the 10th inst. The enemy had cut all the railroads and telegraphic wires, thus cutting off any outside information by mail or otherwise, and the military authorities desired nothing concerning the situation, or what was there taking place, to be made public. Under these circumstances the paper was stopped, and the editor and printers went into service.

The *Republican* continued to issue a quarter sheet, but it contained no news, either local or from abroad, and was, under the circumstances, the most unsatisfactory newspaper that I ever tried to read. I never witnessed such a forcible illustration of the value of newspapers in a community. Everybody was in a state of suspense. There was a pretty general hope that the city would be saved, but no one could give any substantial reason for this hope, having no certain grounds upon which to base it, and ignorance of the real condition kept them from arriving at a different conclusion and preparing for the worst.

All was uncertainty and doubt. Hope was mingled with fear, and it was difficult for any one to decide which preponderated in his own mind. Every man, when he met his neighbor, inquired and was inquired of after the news, and neither could gratify the other. All were the the victims of every imaginable kind—rumor and opinion, from the best to the worst. I hope never to pass through such dreadful days again. Such suspense is worse agony than any reality, be it ever so dreadful.

Savannah News via Augusta.

[From the Augusta Register.]

It is reported that Sherman has sent a force from his army around to the assistance of Foster's troops, on the Coosawhatchie. The enemy's batteries in that quarter have increased, as evidenced by the continuous shelling of the railroad; doing, however, very little damage. Our cavalry continue to scour the country around Hardeeville. In other respects affairs in that quarter are unchanged.

A gentleman who left Savannah on Thursday night, states that Sherman had sent about three regiments into the city as a guard. The remainder of his army is encamped outside the city. Sherman, it was stated, had offered the Mayor every assistance in preserving order, and had stationed guards for the protection of private houses, stores and public buildings. So far as our informant had observed, citizens were unmolested and all private property respected.

Our informant states that Sherman demanded the surrender of the city of Savannah unconditionally, stating that, if complied with, favorable terms would be shown to the garrison; but if not, that he would proceed to take it either by assault, investment, or the most sure process of starvation, and if taken in that manner no quarter would be given to the garrison, nor would he be responsible for the conduct of his troops. He afterwards sent a copy of General Hood's demand for the surrender of Dalton.

Sherman's inspector general, who was bearer of the flag of truce with this, informed one of our officers—Captain Macbeth—that Sherman came very near being killed a day or two previous by a fragment of shell from our side. His body servant was killed, and Sherman barely escaped by dodging behind a rock.

Sherman in a New Character.

HE IS ACCUSED BY THE REBELS OF A DISPOSITION TO CONCILIATE.

[From the Richmond Sentinel, Jan. 4.]

Much of our intelligence from Sherman (says the Charleston *Mercury* of the 27th ult.) at this time is necessarily of a somewhat vague and uncertain character. We believe, however, that it is pretty well ascertained that he has, as yet, undertaken no new movement, though it is reported that he has reinforced Foster's expedition against the Charleston and Savannah Railroad. The bulk of his army is encamped about the outskirts of Savannah, while a small garrison suffices to preserve order within the city.

Sherman is evidently driving to conciliate the people of Savannah. At all buildings, whether public or private, where there has been any apprehension of trouble, he has stationed a guard, and in other respects he seems doing his best to reconcile the community to their yoke. He does not, however, express any such disposition towards the South Carolinians, on whom neither he nor his subordinates ever lose an opportunity of vowing vengeance, dire and insatiable.

Sherman on the Slavery Question—How Slavery is to Exist After the War.

[From the Richmond Dispatch, Jan. 4.]

General Sherman, it is stated by an Augusta paper, said, in connection with a gentleman of Georgia, that "slavery will exist in the South after the conclusion of peace, let the war terminate as it may, and that he expects to own a thousand slaves himself one of these days." We have little doubt that General Sherman made this remark, and as little that it will be realized in the event of our subjugation. What the form of slavery, or what name will be given to it by Yankee ingenuity, we cannot divine; but that the thing itself will continue, and that the negroes will have to work harder and fare worse than slaves have ever worked or fared in the Southern States, is as certain as the rising of to-morrow's sun.

The Yankee sentiment of abolition is simply envy of the slaveholder, not love of the slave. Why should he love the black laborer of a distant region more than the white laborer of his own? Every one is familiar with the harsh and oppressive manner in which Yankee employes in every department of business are treated by their employers. The thing is notorious and undeniable. It is ridiculous, then, to suppose that men so selfish, callous and tyrannical to their white dependents should have a general and generous sympathy with African slaves. With the exception of some fanatics, whose imaginations have run away with their reason, there is not an honest abolitionist in the Northern States. The only question that presents itself to that money seeking and practical race is, "Will slavery pay?" The fate of slavery and the confederacy, if conquered, depends solely upon the answer to that question.

General Sherman has evidently made up his own mind in the affirmative. He knows, and his countrymen know as well, that cotton, rice and sugar cannot be cultivated without slave labor. There is some question about tobacco. It may be that the Yankee will conclude that slave labor will not pay in Virginia and other border States. In that event, they will give a sop to the philanthropy of the age by sacrificing the non-paying labor of those States to the demands of abolition, calling upon the world to admire and applaud their humanity, while they simply change the name and proprietorship of slavery in the cotton States. *General Sherman expects to own a thousand slaves, and other federal generals will be equally fortunate.* The possession of the slaves will be simply transferred from the hands of their present owners to those of soldiers and citizens of the United States. They will raise more cotton, more sugar and more rice than were ever raised before. The only change in the system will be one which will enable the new slaveowners to be relieved from the support of the laborers in sickness and old age. The horror which the African troops experience in this war is nothing to that which they will suffer in fighting the battles of civilization. They will die like sheep under their Yankee taskmasters; but their places can be readily supplied by importing coolies, after the fashion of England and France, or reopening the slave trade. No remonstrances of England and no Africa coast squadrons would prevent the adoption of the latter alternative if found essential to the demand of slave labor. It was the Yankees and England who first brought slaves from Africa to this continent, and either of them would do it again, or any other thing which their interests demand.

Next to the present proprietors, the condition of the present slaves will, in the event of Southern subjugation, be most pitiable. The contrast to their former condition will intensify the agonies of their exhausting toil. They will be in the hands of men who do not understand them, who have no real sympathy with them, nor any concern of any kind, except to squeeze the greatest amount of profit possible out of their bones and sinews. They will curse the day that they ever heard of abolition; but it will be too late.

AID FOR SAVANNAH.

Meeting of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce.

The committee appointed by the Chamber of Commerce, at its meeting on Thursday last, to take steps relative to the proposed aid for the suffering poor of Savannah, met at eleven o'clock yesterday morning. Mr. R. H. McCurdy was appointed to preside, with Mr. John Austin Stevens, Jr., as secretary. The former gentleman, in taking the chair, recommended that provisions be immediately sent to Savannah for the relief of the suffering people of that city. He was of the opinion that this action would have the effect of exercising a very salutary influence on the Southern mind. It would prove that no vindictiveness existed at the North.

Captain CHARLES H. MARSHALL inquired as to what information could be given relative to the entire affair.

Mr. MCCURDY replied that he was not in possession of any information other than that which had been given by Colonel Allen at the meeting of the Chamber on Thursday last.

Mr. PROSPER M. WETMORE thought it impossible for the committee to proceed unless further information was given to them. He understood that Colonel Allen was attached to the treasury department of the government in Savannah. Where relief was strictly necessary the citizens of New York were ever found foremost in the ranks of charity and contribution.

General HIRAM WALBRIDGE then offered the following resolution:—

Resolved, That a sub-committee of five from this committee report at a subsequent meeting what steps should be taken, if any, to carry out in the most practicable and efficient manner the recommendation of the Chamber of Commerce to furnish supplies to the suffering Unionists of the city of Savannah.

Mr. G. W. BLUNT did not believe in fattening rebels to fight us again, and he trusted that no hasty action would be taken.

Mr. ARCHIBALD BAXTER thought that it was not necessary to co-operate with Colonel Allen. He was in favor of sending the provisions to Savannah, and if some rebels derived benefit from them it was a matter of little consequence. This thing would do a great deal of good. Means could easily be found of distributing the provisions properly. He was confident that no great harm could result from sending these articles.

Captain MARSHALL remarked that some doubts existed among many persons as to the extent of the suffering at Savannah previous to the arrival of our troops in the city. There was no sympathy for them or any Union feeling exhibited. They might starve so far as the people of that city were concerned. But as soon as Savannah fell then the cry for relief came up. As to Colonel Allen's credentials, he (Mr. Marshall) was of the opinion that they might be a little stronger. As soon as this request for relief came in a proper manner the citizens of New York would be ready to send forward contributions.

Mr. WINSTON spoke in support of the resolution offered by General Walbridge. When several Union prisoners reached the city of Charleston a number of the people came forward with provisions, but the rebel guards kept them off with their bayonets, proving the fact that the masses, at least, were loyal to the government. Mr. Winston was strongly in favor of sending this relief, and said that it would result in a great deal of good.

A letter was here read by Mr. Dunham from a gentleman at Savannah giving an account of the sufferings which existed there among the people.

Captain MARSHALL asked whether those persons were rebels.

Mr. DUNHAM answered that they might have been. It appeared to him that when a people surrendered to superior force, and were suffering, it was the duty of all charitable persons to tender them assistance.

Captain MARSHALL desired it to be distinctly understood that he did not oppose this measure of sending relief. He did not wish to furnish aid and comfort to the enemy, and the matter should be better understood before further action was taken.

Mr. BABCOCK argued in favor of sending the relief immediately. There could be no question as to the recommendations brought by Colonel Allen. If we sent relief to Europe, there should be no hesitation in sending it to a city of the United States. There was a strong Union feeling at Savannah, and it ought to be fostered.

Mr. F. S. LATHROP was of the opinion that a shipload of provisions would have more effect in fostering the Union in that section of the country than a strong armed force. Mr. Lathrop read another letter from a friend of his in Savannah, which spoke most favorably of the Union sentiment. The speaker had already sent five hundred dollars for the relief of the sufferers.

Captain MARSHALL and Mr. E. C. COWDIN spoke against bringing back the rebels by conciliation. Force of arms was the only true doctrine. They were both, however, in favor of sending relief in a proper manner.

After some further discussion of a similar nature to the above General Walbridge's resolution was passed.

The following sub committee, in accordance with the resolution, was then appointed:—Messrs. Archibald Baxter, E. C. Cowdin, F. S. Lathrop, S. D. Babcock and Captain Ezra Nye.

The meeting then adjourned, subject to the call of the chair.

Relief Meeting in Boston.

BOSTON, Jan. 6, 1865.

A public meeting will be held in Faneuil Hall, on Monday next, to raise funds and extend aid to the people of Savannah.

Steamer Burned—Four Lives Lost.

PORTLAND, Jan. 6, 1865.

The steamer Potomac, from New York for Portland, took fire around her boilers at four o'clock this morning, off Cape Elizabeth, and burned rapidly. The officers, crew and passengers were taken off by a fisherman and have arrived here