THE RUSSIAN AMERICAN COUNTRY.

Its Physical and Topographical Condition.

LAND AND WATER PRODUCTIONS.

&c. &c. &c.

Communication from Professor Baird, of the Smithsonian Institute.

WASHINGTON, April 8, 1867.

The following is the substance of the information derived from Professor Baird, of the Smithsonian Institute, with regard to Russian America:—

MEANS OF INFORMATION.

The Professor has had two explorers in that field between one and two years, who returned last autumn, bringing a complete collection of specimens of natural history from the entire region extending from the British possessions to the shores of the Polar sea.

THE CLIMATE AND TEMPERATURE

of the coast from Prince of Wales Island to the entrance of Behring Straits, during the winter months is about the same as at the city of Washington. There is little snow and much rain. During the summer months heavy fogs prevail.

TIMBER.

The whole country, well up to the northern coast, is heavily timbered—chiefly hard pine forests, the small trees extending down to the very shores. Some of the Islands also are heavily timbered with pine forests and dense undergrowth; others of them are destitute of timber, but covered with grass of luxuriant growth.

THE SOIL.

On the west coast the soil produces excellent barley and roots, such as radishes and turnips, and esculents, such as lettuce, cabbage, &c.

ANIMALS.

Furred animals, such as sea otter, river otter, sable, furred seal, mink, black, silver and red foxes are found in great numbers; red deer on the south and reindeer on the north.

FISH.

Herring, salmon, halibut and codfish abound in exhaustless numbers. In Behring Straits and to the northward great whales are very numerous.

MINERALS.

Surface washings of gold have been discovered on the head waters of streams on the east side of the coast range of mountains.

The geographical developments are the same on the western slopes. Native copper has been discovered in various places on the coast and in the vicinity of Copper river. Iron ore of excellent quality, and believed to exist in exhaustless quantity, is now being smelted and worked by Russian artisans in repairing ships, &c.

Coal is found in large quantities and is used by the Russians for naval purposes. In quality it is similar to New Brunswick coal, but not equal to Cumberland coal. Recent discoveries have been made of what is believed to be a better quality of coal, though it has not yet been tested.

THE INHABITANTS.

The population consists of five or six thousand Russians and fifty or sixty thousand Indians and Esquimaux. The Esquimaux inhabit the coast on the northern sea, and are industrious, peaceable and teachable. They live by hunting and fishing. The Indians inhabit the interior. They are peaceable and live by hunting, fishing and trapping.

Letter from the United States Consul at Amoor River.

NEW YORK, April 4, 1867.

To the Hon. WM. H. SEWARD, Secretary of State of the United States:—

The many erroneous statements in the press of the day in regard to the country of Russian America has induced me to lay before you a number of facts not generally known to the public, and which I trust may be valuable to the Department of State. In my investigations to determine the route of the Russian American telegraph I sought the highest sources of knowledge in regard to the physical and topographical condition of the northwestern limb of our continent. As early as 1856, when I first visited St. Petersburg, I embraced every opportunity to become acquainted with Russian officers and parties high in authority who were competent to enlighten me on the subject, and studied all the maps and books that could be found relating to it.

Rear Admiral Fruighelm, now Governor of the Amoor country, and who held the office of Governor of Russian America for five years, has also given me much valuable information. I have also had frequent conferences with the Governor and directors of the Russian American Company, from whom much has been learned. The boundaries and general outline have been so frequently and fully given that nothing need be said further as to the location of Russian America.

Commencing at 54 degrees 40 minutes north latitude on the Pacific, the main land is marked by a succession of islands to the Peninsula of Alaska, so that open boats or small river steamers can navigate safely between the islands and the main land. Many of these islands are covered with splendid timber, and the waters abound in fish. The coast of the main land is densely timbered, which fact was one of the causes which induced the location of the Russian American telegraph to be made inland and east of the mountains.

The first river of any importance that enters the sea in Russian America is the Stecken or St. Francis, in about 56 degrees of north latitude. This river has been followed by our exploring parties to the cascades, where it breaks through the coast range of mountains dividing British Columbia from Russian America. This river is found navigable for boats fifty miles. After passing the cascades it again becomes navigable for some distance towards the Rocky Mountains. Game and fish are abundant, timber good, and gold mining has already been commenced by a party of Americans. Natives are quite numerous during the fishing season, but are reported friendly, and anxious to trade furs, &c., for merchandise. It is said that the prospect for gold on this river is equal to the old 1849 days of California.

There are many small rivers as you ascend along the coast, and passes over the mountains into the British possessions, and parties of natives trade with the interior tribes more to the east and north by following the source of these streams and thus arrive in the valley between the coast range and the Rocky Mountains. The next river of any importance is the Copper Mine, which enters the sea in view of Mount St. Elias, in about sixty degrees north latitude, and one hundred and forty-two degrees west longitude. This river is of importance in consequence of its location and the access it gives to the interior, as it leads by a lake the waters of the Yukon within Russian territory, giving almost uninterrupted navigation from the coast on the Pacific, by way of the Yukon and Kuichpak, to Behring's Sea, thus giving easy access through a large part of the southwest limb of this country. Next comes Cook's Inlet and a river entering into it which the Russian American company use in connection with the Koosequequim to reach the Knitchpek and Fort Michael.

After passing the peninsula of Alaska we find a considerable sized stream entering into Bristol bay. This stream, by a system of lakes, is said to connect with Cook's inlet. Next in order comes the Koosequequim, a river of considerable magnitude and of importance to the country in giving access to the interior. This section of the country gives considerable trade to the Russian American Company, in which they have trading stations.

The largest, most important and the chief and queen of all the rivers west of the rocky mountains and north of 49 degrees north latitude is the great Knitchpek, which enters into Behring sea, between 64 and 65 degrees north latitude, by several mouths, and on the parallel of 165 degrees west longitude. This great river has an easterly course for some degrees, then bends abruptly to the north some fifty degrees, thence nearly east to a point not far distant from the British frontier, where it receives the Pimpne or Rat river, from the northeast, and the Yuk from the southeast; the junction of these two rivers forms the Knitchpek; it is navigable to the sea, a distance of one thousand miles, for steamboats. This river had never been seen by white men in its whole course previous to the explorations for the construction of the Russian-American telegraph; in fact on many maps the Yukon was traced as an affluent of an imaginary river emptying into the Arctic Ocean, but our explorations have determined a great geographical fact which places the Knitchpek at the head of all rivers on the northwest coast, and giving Russian America the largest river north of 49 degrees.

As we proceed north through Behring's strait and enter the Arctic Ocean we find Kotzebue Sound, which is the mouth of a considerable river, on which is a large population; there are mounds, like on the coast of Arctic Siberia, extensive deposits of animal remains, where fossil ivory may become, as in Siberia, an article of valuable commerce.

Further east there are many bays and sounds, and beyond Point Barrow the Coville river enters Garrison bay. This river has its main course to the south, and the natives report it navigable and inhabited from a point not far from the northern bend of the Knitchpek to the sea.

Fort Yukon, the head station of the Hudson Bay Company west of the Rocky Mountains, is on Russian territory. This fact has not been established by government survey, yet it is well known now to both Russia and England. No difficulty has grown out of it between the two governments, because the Russian American Company and the Hudson's Bay Company enjoy an exclusive trade in those parts, and along the line of understanding as to their management there should be no the disputed territory, lying among the natives. They conflict one way as to the boundaries, and no doubt purpose for procuring.

Lieutenant Kennicott, chief of our exploring party, who died on the Knitchpek last year, had spent, some years previously, a winter at Fort Yukon. He describes the country as favorable to trade and of great importance to the Hudson Bay Company. He explored a large district of the country around the fort generally on foot. He entered the country on his first voyage by the Mackenzie river pass, returning the same way, on the voyage for the exploration of the route of the telegraph. He entered by way of Fort St. Michael, near Behring's Straits. On the upper waters of the Knitchpek and upon the whole course of the Yukon timber is plentiful, the country abounds in game and the rivers and lakes afford fish. Salmon ascend the Knitchpek in great numbers and are largely taken by the natives for food, both for themselves and for their dogs during the winter. The natives are reported by Major Kennicott and by employes of the Hudson Bay Company as peaceable and wonderfully honest, theft being rarely known among them. They are a vigorous, enterprising people, and very fond of foreign trade and merchandise, though the difficulty and cost of transportation by way of the Mackenzie river route limits their supply to much below the demand.

Navigation by way of the Knitchpek would increase the trade and value of this country one hundred fold in a few years; in fact the Knitchpek with steam upon it would reveal a new world to enterprise and adventure. By this stream the whole of a hitherto unknown country is brought within the reach of steam communication from San Francisco, and when the Stars and Stripes shall flaunt at Fort Yukon we may look for mines of gold and silver being discovered quite as rich as those further south. The furs of this country are wonderfully plentiful, and form a valuable and extensive commerce both to the Russian and British traders. That the Hudson Bay Company can afford to transport their merchandise and supplies overland from Hudson Bay, or by way of St. Paul, and return their furs over the same route, is a startling evidence of the value of the trade, because transportation over this long route cannot cost less than $1 per pound. With the Knitchpek open to steam navigation ten cents a pound from San Francisco would pay enormously.

Upon the whole Russian-America, with its dependencies, the islands attached to it, is a valuable country in itself, viewed intrinsically. It is not such a country as Oregon or Washington in climate or soil; but it has, nevertheless, many sources of wealth.

In the southern part gold is known to exist. On Copper Mine river, whence its name, there is copper, though, as a matter of policy, the Russian-American Company have not encouraged mining, because they feared that mining, even if successful, would soon break up their monopoly of the fur trade and open the country to the searching eyes of foreigners and the demoralizing influence of cheaper goods and more lucrative employment of the natives.

The fisheries along the coast and islands will build up a population and commerce there which at no distant day will rival Newfoundland and the coast of the Atlantic, east of Cape Cod. The shoals and banks along the islands of Russian America are the resort of myriads of codfish unsurpassed for size and delicacy. Once give us a lodgment these fishing towns will soon spring into existence, giving for our Pacific coast a nursery for first class seamen, which, in the growing commerce of the Pacific, will be just what we want there in the future in order to give us the supremacy of that ocean. The fisheries alone are worth more to us than the whole cost of the country, and will repay us in the future amply for the investment. The immense population of Asia and the islands of the Pacific will be good customers for our surplus fish, and will readily take all we may have to spare. Timber for building purposes is abundant and convenient, saw mills will soon make the lumber trade a source of great profit, not only for domestic use, but for export to Asia and the more southern islands. Boat and ship building can be carried on profitably where good timber is so abundant and easily procured.

The acquisition is also valuable on account of several deposits of coal along the coast and islands. At Codiac the Russian American Company have worked a coal vein for some years past, and have used it in their forges and workshops, as well as in their steamers employed in carrying on their commerce with California and Asia.

Nor is this country to be counted as nothing in an agricultural point of view. Wheat, barley and oats can be produced as far north as sixty degrees; gardens flourish along the coast in the Russian settlements, producing all the vegetables requisite for domestic use.

It must always be remembered that the Pacific coast is much warmer than the Atlantic coast of equal degrees. The isothermal line of Sitka (New Archangel) is equal to Newfoundland or St. Petersburg. That is about forty degrees to forty-five degrees of Fahrenheit; and the mean of the thermometer is ascertained to be forty-five degrees four minutes; winter, thirty-four degrees seven minutes, summer, fifty-six degrees two minutes.

Taking it then as a whole, the country of Russian America cannot be considered, as some would have it, a dreary waste of glaciers, icebergs, white bears and walrus, and only fit for the Esquimaux and drinkers of train oil.

One more article of commerce must not be lost sight of; that is, ice. On the islands there are many fresh water lakes which afford an inexhaustible supply of very pure ice. The trade in ice so far has been conducted either by the Russian American Company or under their permit, consequently the ice trade has not been developed to any great extent. This trade in the hands of Americans would soon grow to wonderful proportions, for the reason that these lakes in Russian America supply the only ice suitable for shipment on the Pacific north of the equator. I did not mention in order, when speaking of the fisheries, that all the way north from Codiac to the Arctic whales are found in great abundance. Codiac and Bristol Bay are all whaling grounds, and many a New England town owes its wealth to the large catch of whales in Russian-American waters. Walrus, berries plentiful at and about Behring's Strait, fishing settlements are with us in August. With Amoor of these walruses ments along the coast the ivory wealth to our enterprising will become no small source fishermen.

[illegible] to climate and temperature.

One more fact in [illegible] at the great eastern bend of the Major Kennicott hundred miles by the course of the river Kuichpek, [illegible] thence into Behring sea. The ice in the river broke up on the 23d day of May, and on the 25th a portion of his companions embarked in native boats, taking with them Major Kennicott's body, navigated the river to the sea without obstruction, and then coasted north seventy miles to Fort St. Michael, a post of the Russian-American Company. This proves a great deal as to the favorable temperature of that country, and makes the Knitchpek nearly as early as the St. Lawrence in point of navigation.

I have the honor to be, very truly, your most humble servant, P. McD. COLLINS, U. S. C. A. Amoor river.

LIFE SAVING INVENTIONS.

Commission of Examination—First Meeting and Organization—The Inventions Submitted, &c.

The Commission appointed by the Secretary of the Treasury to examine life saving inventions, met yesterday for the first time, at No. 23 Pine street. This Commission consists of nine members, whose names and occupations are as follows:—Joseph Cragg, local inspector of steamboats, district of Baltimore, Md.; Asople L. Bemis, supervising inspector, Ninth district, Buffalo, N. Y.; Alfred Guthrie, supervising inspector, Eighth district, Chicago, Ill.; J. N. Guthrie, supervising inspector, Sixth district, Louisville, Ky.; William Rogers, supervising inspector, Tenth district, New Orleans, La.; Captain William Bradford, supervising inspector, Second district, New York city; John M. Weeks, local inspector, district of New York; Colonel Charles L. Stephenson, supervising inspector, Fifth district, Galena, Ill.; Captain W. M. Mew, general superintendent of steam inspection.

The Commission went into secret session for the purpose of organizing. After their adjournment the secretary announced that A. S. Bemis was chosen president and M. A. Clancy secretary, and that the following resolutions had been adopted:—

Resolved, That inventions shall be examined in the following order:—The first division shall embrace boilers of steam engines, safety valves, steam gauges, water gauges, anti-incrustators, steam pumps, steam syphons, hose, hose couplings and fusible alloys; the second division shall embrace life boats, life rafts, detaching gear, lowering apparatus and life preservers; the third division shall embrace steering apparatus, drags, windlasses and capstans; the fourth division shall embrace flag signals, signal lights, devices for reefing topsails, and nautical instruments of all kinds; the fifth division shall embrace all other inventions of a life saving character not included in the above.

The following was also adopted:—

Resolved, That inventors be requested to appear at No. 23 Pine street, to register their names and inventions at as early a day as practicable, to the end that the labors of this commission be facilitated.

Mr. WEEKS was instructed to procure a boiler to test the various valves submitted. It was announced also that inventors will be required to bear their due proportion of the expense of testing their inventions.

The following are the names of the inventions; fire far submitted:—Patent sheet anchor; water cask and extinguisher; mode of hanging metallic boilers and life boat combined; mode and davits; detaching tubes; lowering, detaching for unlashing boats; impproved apparatus; apparatus; gauge-cocks and water-steering [illegible]; steam whistle; steam gauge; guage combined; sleeping berth and lifeboat; an self-unhooking eyebolt; detaching apparatus; improved method of anchoring; metallic water gauge; hydrostatic unsubmersible vessel; magnetic water guage; jacket for water guage; steam steering apparatus; anti-incrustator; regulator for propellers; low water detacher; metallic lifeboat and raft; locked valve; pressure indicator; lowering machine; low water reporter; duplex slide valve; life-saving mattress; depression of water; life barge; safety valve; life preserver; patent boiler; self-furling sails; steam anchor; propeller; lifeboat and trunk combined.

The Commission adjourned to half-past ten o'clock A. M. to-day, when it is expected that safety valves will be examined.

VIOLATIONS OF THE EXCISE LAW.

George H. Nute, 34 Park row; William Driscoll, 132 Elizabeth street; Henry Stubbe, 38 Ann street; William Wilkenning, 19 Rector street, were yesterday brought before Justice Hogan, at the Tombs, charged with violating the Excise law, and held to bail in $100 each to answer before the Court of General Sessions.

John Colahan, of 422 Second avenue, and John Reiner, of 472 Ninth avenue, were arraigned before Justice Dodge yesterday charged with selling liquor on Sunday. and Charles Wilken, of 253 avenue A, was charged with selling liquor without a license. They were each held to answer in $300 bail.

The following parties were arraigned yesterday at the Essex Market Police Court charged with violation of the Excise law and committed to answer by Justice Mansfield:—Charles Elizabeth Mott, 176 Pitt street; [illegible] 340 Stanton street; William Beg[illegible] avenue C; Francis McArdle, 222 Monroe street; Stephen Rullen, 293 East Eleventh street; Jacob Morrison, 15 Stanton street; John O'Shiger, No. 5 Fifth street.

At the Fourth District Police Court the following parties were arraigned similarly charged and committed to answer by Justice Ledwith:—John McGeg[illegible] East Thirty-street, near Eighth avenue; Mary Brad[illegible] avenue; Henry [illegible] ninth street; Michael Gress, 630 [illegible] Grimble, 510 West Third, 770 Eighth avenue; [illegible] Kruse, 261 West Forty-Forty-fourth street; Frederick [illegible] West side First avenue, seventh street; Daniel Sheehan, west side First avenue, between fifty-ninth and sixtieth streets.

SALES OF REAL ESTATE.

By A. J. Bleecker, Son & Co.
(Under the direction of Thomas Nelson, Esq., referee.)

MORRISANIA.

Homestead lot on Railroad av., n. e. corner 4th st.; lot 175 [illegible] $11,275
House and lot on Washington av., n. w. corner 4th st.; lot [illegible] 2,950
House and lot on Railroad av., e. s., near 11th st.; lot 75x150 4,000

By E. H. Ludlow & Co.

4 story brick house and lot No. 329 West 23d st. $10,000
4 story brown stone house and lot No. 467 West 22d st. 14,000

CAPT. WIRZ AND THE ANDERSONVILLE PRISON.

Attempt to Whitewash the Memory of Wirz by His Counsel.

TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE:—Intending to leave the United States for a time, I feel it my duty, before I start, to fulfil in part a promise which, a few hours before his death, I gave to my unfortunate client, Captain Wirz, who was executed at Washington on the 10th day of November, 1865. Protesting up to the last moment his innocence of those monstrous crimes with which he was charged, he received my word that, having failed to save him from a felon's doom, I would as long as I lived do everything in my power to clear his memory. I did that the more readily as I was then already perfectly convinced that he suffered wrongfully. Since that time his unfortunate children, both here and in Europe, have constantly implored me to wipe out the terrible stains which now cover the name of their father. Though times do not seem propitious for obtaining full justice, yet, considering that man is mortal, I will, before entering upon a perilous voyage, perform my duty to those innocent orphans and also to myself.

I will now give a brief statement of the causes which led to the arrest and execution of Captain Wirz. In April, 1865, President Johnson issued a proclamation stating that, from evidence in the possession of the "Bureau of Military Justice, it appeared that Jefferson Davis was implicated in the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, and for that reason the President offered a reward of $100,000 on the capture of the then fugitive ex-President of the Southern Confederacy. That testimony has since been found to be entirely false and a mere fabrication, and the suborner Conover is now under sentence in the jail of this city, the two perjurers, whom he suborned, having turned State evidence against him, while the individual by whom Conover was suborned has not yet been brought to justice.

Certain high and influential enemies of Jefferson Davis, either then already aware of the character of the testimony of those witnesses, or not thinking their testimony quite sufficient to hang Jeff Davis, expected to find the wanting material in the terrible mortality of Union prisoners at Andersonville. Orders were issued accordingly to arrest a subaltern officer, Captain Wirz, a poor, friendless and wounded prisoner of war (he being included in the surrender of General Johnston), and, besides, a foreigner by birth. On the 7th of May he was placed in the Old Capitol prison at Washington, and from that time the greater part of the Northern press was busily engaged in forming the unfortunate man in the eyes of the Northern people into such a monster that it became almost impossible for him to obtain counsel. Even his countrymen, the Swiss Consul General, publicly refused to accept money to defray the expenses of the trial. He was doomed before he was heard, and even the permission to be heard according to law was denied him. To increase the excitement and give éclat to the proceeding, and to inflame still more the public mind, the trial took place under the very dome of the capitol of the nation. A military commission, presided over by one of the most arbitrary and despotic generals in the country was formed, and the paroled prisoner of war, his wounds still open, and so feeble that he had to recline during the trial on a sofa, carried before the same. How that trial was conducted the whole world knows. The enemies of generosity and humanity believed it then to be a sure thing to get at Jeff Davis.

Therefore, the first charge was that of conspiracy between Wirz, Jefferson Davis, Seddon, Howell Cobb, R. B. Winder and a number of others to kill the Union prisoners. The trial lasted for three months, but unfortunately for the bloodthirsty instigators not a particle of evidence was produced showing the existence of such a conspiracy; yet Captain Wirz was found guilty of that charge! Having thus failed another effort was made. On the night before the execution of the prisoner a telegram was sent to the Northern press from this city stating that Wirz had made important disclosures to General L. C. Baker, the well known detective, implicating Jeff Davis, and that the confession would probably be given to the public. On the same evening some parties came to the confessor of Wirz, Rev. Father Boyle, and also to me, one of them informing me that a high Cabinet officer wished to assure Wirz, that if he would implicate Jefferson Davis with the atrocities committed at Andersonville his sentence would be commuted. He, the messenger or whoever, in presence of [illegible] requested me to inform Wirz of this. Father Boyle I told Wirz next morning what had happened. The Captain simply quietly replied, "Mr. Schade, you know that Jefferson Davis. He had always told you that I do not know anything as to what was done at Andersonville. Now anything of him I would not become a traitor against him or anybody else, even to save my life." He likewise denied that he had made any statement whatever to General Baker. Thus ended the attempt to suborn Captain Wirz against Jeff Davis. That alone shows what a man he was. How many of his defamers would have done the same? With his wounded arm in a sling the poor paroled prisoner mounted, two hours later, the scaffold. His last words were that he died innocent—and so he did. The 10th day of November, 1865, will indeed be a black stain on the pages of American history.

To weaken the effect of his declaration of innocence, and of the noble manner in which Wirz died, a telegram was manufactured here and sent North stating that on the 27th day of October Mrs. Wirz (who actually was nine hundred miles on that day away from Washington), had been prevented by that Stantonian *deus ex machina*, General L. C. Baker, from poisoning her husband! Thus, on the same day when the unfortunate family lost their husband and father, a cowardly and atrocious attempt was made to blacken their character also. On the next day I branded the whole as an infamous lie; and since then I never heard of it again, though it emanated from a brigadier general in the United States Army.

All those who were charged with having conspired with Captain Wirz have since been released, except Jefferson Davis, the prisoner of the American "Castle Chillon." Captain Winder was let off without trial, and if any of the others have been tried, which I do not know, certainly none of them have been hung. As Captain Wirz could not conspire alone, nobody will now, in view of that important fact, consider him guilty of that charge. So much, then, for charge No. 1.

As to charge No. 2—to-wit, murder in violation of the laws and customs of war—I do not hesitate to declare that about 145 out of 160 witnesses on both sides declared during the trial—that Captain Wirz never murdered nor killed any Union prisoners, with his own hands or otherwise. All those witnesses (about twelve to fifteen) who testified that they saw Captain Wirz kill a prisoner have sworn falsely, abundant proofs of that assertion being in existence. The hands of Captain Wirz are clear of the blood of prisoners of war. He would certainly have at least intimated to me a knowledge of the alleged murders with which he was charged. In most all cases no names of the alleged murdered men could be given, and where it was done, no such persons could be identified. The terrible scene in court, when he was confronted with one of the witnesses, and the latter insisting that Wirz was the man who killed a certain Union prisoner, which irritated the prisoner so much that he almost fainted, will still be remembered. That man (Grey) swore falsely, and God alone knows what the poor innocent prisoner must have suffered at that moment. That scene was depicted and illustrated in the Northern newspapers as if Wirz had broken down on account of his guilt. Seldom has a mortal suffered more than that friendless and forsaken man.

Fearing lest this communication will be too long I will merely speak of the principal and most intelligent of those false witnesses who testified to individual murder on the part of Captain Wirz. Upon his testimony the Judge Advocate in his final argument laid particular stress on account of his intelligence. This witness prepared also pictures of the alleged cruelty of the Record, were handed to the Commission, and are in Northern illustrated papers. He swore that he was a Frenchman and a Baume, and represented himself as a relative of Marquis de Lafayette. After having so well testified and on the day of October, before the commendation testimony was concluded, he was [illegible] to a clerkship in the Department of the Interior. This occurred while one of the witnesses for the defence (Duncan) was arrested in open court, and placed in prison before he had testified. After the execution of Captain Wirz some of the Germans of Washington recognized in de la Baume a deserter from the Seventh New York (Steuben) regiment, whose name was not de la Baume, but Felix Oesser, a native of Saxony. They went to Secretary Harlan, and he dismissed the impostor and important witness in the Wirz trial on the 21st of November, eleven days after the execution. Nobody who is acquainted with the Conover testimony in consequence of which the President of the United States was falsely induced to place a reward of $100,000 upon the head of an innocent man, will be astonished at the above disclosures of the character of testimony before the Military Commissions. So much for charge No. II.

If from twelve to fifteen witnesses could be found who were willing to testify to so many acts of murder on the part of Wirz, there must certainly have been no lack of such who were willing to swear to minor offences. Such was the unnatural state of public mind against the prisoner at that time that such men landed themselves, and were regarded, as heroes, as having testified in the manner above described; yet, on the other hand, the witnesses for the defence were intimidated, particularly after one of them had been arrested.

But who is responsible for the many lives that were lost at Andersonville and in other Southern prisons? That question has not been fully answered. These sacrifice hecatombs on whose heads the guilt should rest. It was certainly not of human beings is to be laid at the door of Captain Wirz, when, in consequence of the fault of poor Captain Wirz, when, in consequence of medicines by the Union declared contraband of war by the Northern authorities, prisoners died for the want of the same going South, had to read during the war that laid Old Capitol Prison by the arrival and placed into [illegible] quinine, or other medicines, been confiscated in their petticoats! Thousands have been [illegible] the ingress of medical stores from our lines, and even the supplies of private physicians in the South, the scarcity of medicines became general all over the South. Surgeon J. C. Pilot, writing September 6, 1865, the South Surgeon J. C. Pilot, writes, September 6, 1865, from Andersonville, (this letter was produced by the Judge Advocate in the Wirz trial):—"We have but little more than the indigenous barks and roots with which to meet the numerous forms of disease to which our attention is daily called. For the treatment of wounds, ulcers, &c., we have literally nothing, except water. Our wards, some of them are wild with gangrene, and we are compelled to fold our arms and look quietly upon its ravages not even having stimulants to support the system for its depressing influence; the article being so limited in supply that it can only be issued for cases under the knife."

That provisions in the South were scarce will astonish nobody, when it is remembered that the war was carried on. General Sheridan boasted his official report that, in the Shenandoah Valley alone, he burned two thousand barns filled with wheat, corn, and all the mills in the whole tract of country that he destroyed all factories of cloth, and killed drove off every animal, even to the poultry, that could contribute to human sustenance. And those deeds were repeated in different parts of the South, and so thoroughly that last month, two years after end of the war, Congress had to appropriate a million of dollars to save the people of those regions from all starvation. The destruction of railroads and obstacles of transportation by which food could be hurried to those without it, increased the difficulties in giving sufficient food to our prisoners.

The Confederate authorities, aware of their inability to sustain their prisoners, informed the Northern agents of the great mortality, and urgently requested that the prisoners should be exchanged, even without regard to the surplus which the Confederates had on the exchange rolls from former exchanges, that is, man for man. But our War Department did not consent to an exchange. They did not want to "exchange skeletons for healthy men." Finally, when all hopes of exchange were gone, Colonel Ould, the Confederate Commissioner, offered early in August, 1864, to deliver up the federal sick and wounded, without requiring an equivalent in return, and pledged that the number would amount to ten or fifteen thousand, and if it did not he would make up that number with well men. Although this offer was made in August, the transportation was not sent for them (to Savannah) until December, although he urged and implored (to use his own words) that haste should be made. During that very period the most of the deaths at Andersonville occurred. Congressman Covode, who lost two sons in Southern prisons, will do well if he inquires who those "skeletons" were which the Hon. Secretary of War did not want to exchange for healthy men. If he does he will hereafter be perhaps less bitter against the people of the South.

But has the North treated her Southern prisoners so well that she should lift up her hands and cry "anathema" over the South? Mr. Stanton reports to Congress July 19, 1866, that of Southern prisoners there died in the North 26,436, and of Northern prisoners in the South 22,576. What a fearful record! Over 26,000 of prisoners dying in the midst of plenty. Mr. Stanton gives the total number of prisoners in the North at 220,000, and in the South at 126,940. Suppose this to be correct, though this statement comes certainly from no impartial source, there died of prisoners in the South, without medicines and provisions, the fifth part, and in the North, with medicines and provisions, the eighth part. But in the number of Southern prisoners in the North are probably included the paroled prisoners of Lee's, Johnston's and Smith's armies, who never entered a Northern prison. If that be so the mortality of Southern prisoners in the North will be even greater than that of the federal prisoners in the South!

We used justly to proclaim in former times that ours was "the land of the free and the home of the brave." But when one half of the country is shrouded in a despotism which now only finds a parallel in Russian Poland, and when our generals and soldiers quietly permit that their former adversaries in arms shall be treated worse than the Helots of old, brave soldiers though they may be, who, when the forces and resources of both sections were more equal, have not seldom seen the backs of our best generals, not to speak of such as Butler and consorts, then we may well question whether the "star spangled banner still waves over the land of the free or the home of the brave." A noble and brave soldier never permits his antagonist to be calumniated and trampled upon after an honorable surrender. Besides, notwithstanding the decision of the highest legal tribunal in the land, that military commissions are unconstitutional, the earnest and able protestations of President Johnson, and the sad results of military commissions, yet such military commissions are again established by recent legislation of Congress all over the suffering and starving South.

History is just, and, as Mr. Lincoln used to say, we cannot escape history. Puritanical hypocrisy, self-adulation and self-glorification will not save those enemies of liberty from their just punishment.

Not even a Christian burial of the remains of Captain Wirz has been allowed by Secretary Stanton. They still lie, side by side with another and acknowledged victim of military commissions, the unfortunate Mrs. Surratt, in the yard of the former jail in this city.

If anybody should desire to reply to this, I politely beg that it may be done before the 1st of May next, as then I shall leave the country to return in the fall. After that day letters will reach me in care of the American Legation, or Mr. Benedetto Bolzani, No. 38 Leipzig street, Berlin, Prussia.

LOUIS SCHADE, Attorney at Law.

WASHINGTON, April 4, 1867.

THE PRESIDENT DEFENDED AT HOME.

Speech About President Johnson in Tennessee by One of His Private Secretaries.

Hon. Edmund Cooper, late private secretary of President Johnson, and member of the last Congress from Tennessee, proposes himself as a candidate for re-election, and in a speech at Shelbyville, Tenn., on the 1st inst., he propounded the reconstruction doctrine of the President. It varies but little from the policy of the Executive as enunciated in his various veto messages. But as a matter of public interest we subjoin some of the allusions to the President, which the speaker seemed called upon to make to the people of his own State. Said Mr. Cooper:—

Now, we deny that the President has brought any disgrace on our beloved State. We deny that he has committed any official act which sustains the charge that he has shown any defection towards, or abandonment of any of the great principles upon which he was elected. We deny that he has degenerated in any manner from the high and elevated position which he occupied as a statesman and patriot before the public duties of the assumed the arduous and responsible duties of the Presidency. We deny in a word that he has committed any personal or political act justifying the libellous and unjust charge that he is or ever has been unprincipled in any of his private or political dealings.

The speaker concluded with the following allusions to the President:—

The President of the United States is charged with having committed "great crimes and misdemeanors," and I avail myself of this opportunity once more to vindicate his character, and bear my humble testimony to the firmness with which he has, undismayed, resisted all unconstitutional legislation, and as a bulwark, protecting the rights of the people. My friends, think of him in his earlier years, when he had been put to hard struggles for mere existence, and yet he found time for close and laborious study. This very study made him earnest and intense. Simple in his tastes, masculine and untiring in his efforts, he is of that mould in which, in earlier times, the successful men of action were cast. He acknowledges in life no such thing as fail, and whatever may be his future he has never despaired. It was by those rare and romantic incidents which fiction cannot invent, and which I call with diffidence from the fields of his real life, that he ascended the social and political ladder until he has won palpable and distinct reputation and rank. His very success proved all the sarcasm of wit, all the wails of party, by arslanders of envy, and he is now a mark whose crucifixions steeped in the poison that is distilled from intolerable of baffled ambition and mordinate hatred who know him know his early struggles. Only throw many years he best can fully appreciate them. Here it was work. labored for independence, then is there nothing. My friends and country, protect it? Think of his ing in such a life to shine, he struggled manfully against unconquerable hope, caused by poverty and the obstacles in his path, his heart aspiring, yet wrung, and want. Think of a [illegible] ed—still unshaken and undismayed, chafed, and sorely—until to-day he is the President ed, always a boy, feeling with what energies he was Picture-fettrolled by the three great friends God has given to the poor—

"Faith, Energy, Time"—

faith in the divinity that was within him, energy to perfect its development, and time in which its great aims could be wrought out. These talismanic words were indelibly stamped on his memory, and always cheered him through hardships and difficulties. Surely such a life, instead of exciting in the hearts of the great and good feelings of envy and jealousy, should only make them feel that through such a life, enjoyed as the energetic and robust enjoy it, God's great principle of success moves and breathes, and thus thus are we taught how much of aid and solace the many derive from the everlasting genius of the few. The President has undergone serious trials. His strong and self-reliant nature has never been lapped in ease and luxury. They who never suffer pain or encounter opposition know nothing of the exquisite pleasure incident from the repose succeeding toil. The duty of the noble on earth falls not amid the rosy garden of the epicurean. We may covet the man who enjoys and rests, but the smile of heaven settles rather on the brow of those who labor and aspire. Success engenders in the minds of the low and groveling envy, hatred, malice and all uncharitableness." They would destroy what they cannot rival or corrupt. They would undermine of "stories oft repeated," which have no existence except in the filth and slime of their own hearts. Kennels rank with corruption, where young dogs are fed.

Tray, Blanche and Sweetheart
To bark at his heels.

And such men dare to question the integrity, character and political honesty of Andrew Johnson.

An eagle in his pride of plume
Hawed at by mousing owls.

MR. PEABODY AND THE CHARLESTON BOARD OF TRADE.

Mr. George Peabody, the great philanthropist, was invited to attend the first annual celebration of the Charleston Board of Trade, on the 2d instant, and the invitation was extended by the President of the Board in a note from which the following is an extract:—

Your well timed remembrance of the poor and afflicted of this section of your native land, has been engraven too deeply upon our hearts for future prosperity to obliterate. The mark of war is still upon our homes, but come and see us. We have yet a country, a glorious country. You will meet us in the full tide of "spring time." The birds still sing, the flowers bloom; our climate is mild and balmy, and your welcome will be hearty and sincere.

The following is Mr. Peabody's reply:—

SALEM, MASS., March 28, 1867.

WILLIAM S. HASTIE, Esq., President of the Charleston Board of Trade:—MY DEAR SIR: I have but just received your very kind note, with the invitation of the Board of Trade to join them at their approaching annual dinner, owing to the fact of its being at South Danvers, the town which was my birthplace, and where letters for me are sent in such vast [illegible] and [illegible] that I only have them forwarded to me at intervals, [illegible] my apology for the one or three weeks. This must be my apology for not sooner replied to the kind message of the Board of Trade, though, had I received it sooner, it would have been impossible for me to have accepted, on account of many pressing engagements, which must necessarily occupy my time, until my departure for England. But I beg, through you, to express my regret I am obliged to decline the Board, that it is cepting the invitation of a body regard the honor of acquainted with them on so much high character, and of being with them on so much high character, doubly interesting. I trust, as marking an occasion—ment of a new era of commercial prosperity for your city, which has suffered so much, but whose progress of commerce and the arts of peace, I hope, the will, ere long, repair the ravages of the late war; and, though I cannot now meet you, I hope, gracious war; and, though I cannot now meet you, I hope, gracious Providence spare my life for another visit to my native land, to again see your fair city literally risen from its ashes, and in the enjoyment of such prosperity as shall more than surpass that of its former years. With the assurances of my high respect, I am, very truly yours, GEORGE PEABODY.

MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS.

BOARD OF ALDERMEN.

The Portrait of Governor Fenton, &c.

The Board met at four o'clock yesterday afternoon, the President, Joseph Shannon, in the chair.

The Board had a concurrence with Councilmen on a resolution authorizing Governor Fenton to select an artist to paint his portrait to be hung up in the City Hall.

A communication was received from Mayor Hoffman setting forth that the ordinance looking to the payment of blind persons was so defective in its character that it could not be carried into effect. Ordered on file.

A communication was received from the Board of Health, accompanying another communication from the Croton Aqueduct Board, setting forth that the condition of the pavements in the tracks of the Belt Railroad, in Fifty-ninth street, and other streets, could not be improved except by the passage of an ordinance by the Common Council, making it obligatory upon the company to keep those streets in repair, which was referred to the Committee on Law.

After transacting some more routine business the Board adjourned for one week.

BOARD OF COUNCILMEN.

The Board held a special meeting yesterday afternoon, the President, Mr. Brinkman, presiding.

They concurred with the Aldermen in adopting a resolution directing the erection of a public urinal on one of the sidewalks surrounding the City Hall Park, under the direction of the Street Commissioner.

The resolution directing the Clerk of the Common Council to prepare the annual corporation manual was called up. It provided that 10,000 copies should be prepared at an expense of $3,500, to be distributed as follows:—3,500 copies to be granted to each of the Boards, 500 to the Mayor and 2,500 for the Clerk of the Common Council. On motion the resolution was amended by striking out the 500 copies for the Mayor and distributing them equally between the respective Boards. It was then laid over for future action.

The Board adjourned till Monday next.

BROOKLYN BOARD OF ALDERMEN.

The Board of Aldermen met yesterday afternoon. The Fire Department Committee reported favorably in the matter of building a bell tower in the Sixteenth ward and approp