Richmond Dispatch.

TUESDAY MORNING.....JULY 2, 1861.

☞ The following notice from the Secretary of War to newspaper correspondents is timely and appropriate. War is a new thing to us all—especially such a war as that now in progress. It is natural enough that in its incipiency there should be such acts of indiscretion in the press, and such mistakes in crediting false rumors, as inexperience in such a war would occasion. We have, however, had some experience, and the mistakes and indiscretions of the past should be a warning for the future. There is a decided change for the better already perceivable, and we are sure the dignified and gentlemanly appeal of the honorable Secretary of War will have the effect of inducing the press to be still more guarded in what it has to say about preparations and events:

CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA,
WAR DEPARTMENT,
Richmond, July 1, 1861.

To Newspaper Correspondents:

GENTLEMEN:—While I have not withheld permission from any of the representatives of the press to visit the camps in Virginia, and while I am as much the uncompromising advocate of an unshackled press as I am of the freedom of speech, and of the Independence of the Confederate States, yet I have thought it proper, under existing circumstances, to make an appeal to you to forbear from the transmission and publication of such intelligence as might be detrimental to the great cause in which we all feel so deep an interest.

You are aware of the great amount of valuable information obtained by us through the medium of the enterprising journals of the North; and we may derive profit from their example by a discriminating and judicious reserve in communications for the Southern journals.

It must be obvious that statements of strength, or of weakness, at any of the points in the vicinity of the enemy, when reproduced in the North, as they would be in spite of all the vigilance in our power, would warn them of danger to themselves, or invite an attack upon us; and, in like manner, any statements of the magnitude of batteries, of the quantity and quality of arms or of ammunition, of movements in progress or in supposed contemplation, of the condition of troops, of the Commissariat, &c., might be fraught with essential injury to the service.

To gentlemen of intelligence and of unquestionable loyalty to the cause of the Confederate States, I do not deem it necessary to be more explicit; nor can I doubt for a moment that you will appreciate my motives in making this frank appeal to your patriotism and discretion.

L. P. WALKER,
Secretary of War.

☞ THE READ SHELL.—We have given a communication from Alabama, touching the shell invented by Dr. JNO. B. READ, of that State, a direction which we think the best.

The Last Brilliant Achievement.

We publish this morning full accounts of the bold and successful plot of the capture of the steamer St. Nicholas and one brig and two schooners—the brig laden with a valuable cargo of coffee, and the schooners one with ice and the other with coal—all highly acceptable, especially the ice. Col. R. THOMAS, of Richard, was the hero of the affair, and he conducted it in a manner that at once makes him famous. Disguised as an old French woman, who could not speak a word of English, (poor creature!) he took passage on the St. Nicholas at Baltimore for Washington.—After getting down into the Bay he threw off his disguise, and with the co operation of his men, who shipped as New York Zouaves, he took possession of the steamer. He was joined by Capt. HOLLINS, of our Navy, at Point Lookout, who participated in the captures of the other vessels. We refer to the details in our news columns.

This is a very beautiful addition to the number of the gallant and successful surprises by our brave Southern boys, since the struggle began. It is but the beginning, we opine, of a catalogue of daring exploits at sea that will greatly enrage the old ape, and ruffle the sweet and amiable disposition of old "Fuss and Feathers." Old French women will be a terror to them both. We very much fear that that class of women, and especially those a little unhandsome (for we learn that our gallant Captain did not look like a *pretty* French woman) will be subjected to very rude treatment by the Lincolnites, for they will fear all of them are Southern officers in disguise. The other officers associated with Col. THOMAS in the achievement, are Lieut. GEO. W. ALEXANDER, Adjutant, and Lieut. F. Gibson. These three headed the boarding parties in the captures.

Barbarities in the Northwest.

The account published this morning of the destruction of the fine dwelling, barn, and other houses and property generally of Mr. RIGHTER, near Fairmont, in Marion county, brings to the notice of the Southern people one of the most execrable acts of vandalism of the present ruthless invasion. It is copied from that Black Republican organ, the Wheeling *Intelligencer*, and therefore is hardly magnified in its enormity. The traitors in the Northwest are heaping up trouble for themselves, and if there are engaged in this war one class of men whose outrages excite a thirst for revenge more than any other, they are the people of Ohio. They come from a State teeming with fertility—having perhaps more rich arable land than any other State of like area—which was carved out of the princely domain given to the Federal Government by Virginia. Vengeance wreaked upon such men will be especially grateful to every Virginian. We trust and believe that they will get what they deserve.

"War to the Knife."

Many of the letter envelopes manufactured in the North exhibit a ferocious spirit, which we are happy to see finds no imitators in the South. One of the most popular envelope mottoes is "War to the knife and the knife to the hilt." What a ferocious, savage, implacable spirit! Why wouldn't "war to the knife" answer, without adding that superfluous piece of bombast, "and the knife to the hilt?" Oh, most truculent and bloody-minded belligerents, compared with whom the warriors of Shanghai are modest and unassuming. "War to the knife and the knife to the hilt," when, as Bethel proved, the mere exhibition of a North Carolina knife at the end of a gun made the "knife and hilt" gentry take to their heels at a speed which beat the best time of Planet.

Yankee Ward.

The defenders of Mathias' point did rid the world of a very great scamp when they put an end to the life of Capt. WARD—commonly styled Yankee WARD—commander of the Freeborn. He was a man in very bad odor in the Navy—a very scurvy and detestable scamp.—He had given us a foretaste of his brutality, and would have rioted in his war upon private property and defenceless people whenever he could have gotten the opportunity. The curtailment of his life winds up his infamous deeds. There are more like him who deserve to follow after. He belonged more especially to the chicken-stealing department, for which he was in every way competent.

NORTH CAROLINA STATE CONVENTION.—The Convention of North Carolina, on Thursday passed an ordinance transferring the State to the Confederate Government; also, allowing the North Carolina [illegible] out of the State, to vote for [illegible] members of Assembly, Governor, [illegible] of the Confederate Congress, and Vice-President. The Convention adjourn over on Friday until [illegible].

Economical Independence and Wealth of the South.

The impending crisis to the commerce and manufactures of the North is beginning to make itself manifest to those who have any faculties of perception and of reflection. The fallacies of HELPER's statistics are no longer fashionable. Such a singular exposition of political economy as the following from that foolish rhodomontade is no longer gospel:

"Any observant American, from whatever point of the compass he may hail, who will take the trouble to pass through the Southern markets, both great and small, as we have done, and inquire where this article, that and the other came from, will be utterly astonished at the variety and quantity of Northern agricultural productions kept for sale. And this state of things is growing worse and worse every year. Exclusively agricultural as the South is in her industrial pursuits, she is barely able to support her sparse and degenerate population. Her men and her domestic animals, both dwarfed into shabby objects of commiseration under the blighting effects of slavery, are constantly feeding on the multifarious products of Northern soil. And if the whole truth must be told, we may here add, that these products, like all other articles of merchandize purchased at the North, are generally bought on credit, and in a great number of instances, by far too many, never paid for—not, as a general rule, because the purchasers are dishonest or unwilling to pay, but because they are impoverished and depressed by the retrogressive and deadening operations of slavery, that most unprofitable and pernicious institution under which they live."

It is now beginning to be discovered, even at the North, that this witness, like many others who go on the stand to support an unsound cause, proves too much. He admits the variety and quantity of Northern productions which have been sold at the South, but which he says are never paid for, not because the purchasers are dishonest, but because they are impoverished and depressed by the retrogressive and deadening operations of the institutions under which they live. The New York *Herald*, whose testimony in this case cannot be impeached on the ground of partiality to the South, admits that there is not a merchant, trader, farmer, manufacturer, or shipowner, from the capes of Delaware to Passomoquoddy, who does not know that, as a class, the merchants and traders of the South have been the safest and best purchasers that ever came from a distance to buy in the Eastern markets.

It is another undeniable fact, that when this crisis came upon New York in 1857, ripping up the bubble of Eastern and Northern expansion, it was the trade of the South that saved thousands upon thousands of New York merchants from bankruptcy, and which first set the wheels and hammers of Northern manufactories again in motion. The trade of the great Northwest was pronounced in New York at that time to be perfectly rotten, and has not since entirely recovered a sound condition. On the other hand, the leading commercial journals of New York, have over and over again conceded that the South, for the last twenty years, has never failed in its payments to the North, and instead of getting large amounts of agricultural productions and of manufactures on a credit which is never paid, there is not a Northern merchant or producer of any kind but would be glad, with the return of peace, to sell to the South twice as much of Northern products as he ever sold before.

Even HELPER could not deny the magnitude of the Southern consumption of Northern productions, and yet he was absurd enough to argue that the North should destroy the South by an aggressive and agrarian invasion of its social institutions. And those very New York papers which were foremost in exposing his fallacies, have been insane enough to join the hue and cry of the present wicked and senseless war. The first effect of this policy has been to destroy the great Southern market for Northern productions, the existence and value of which they had acknowledged. It threw back at once upon the Northern market the surplus of potatoes, onions, apples, corn, hay, butter and cheese which Northern farmers had sold at the South, and the innumerable fabrics of cotton, linen, wool, leather, metal, glass, clay, &c., which it had taken from Northern workshops. It is needless to say that the financial revulsion in the North which must follow this suicidal war upon its own interests, will surpass the most gigantic disaster of the kind that has ever been witnessed in modern times.

But this unholy and absurd crusade, so ruinous to the North, has made the idea of industrial independence as rife in the South as that of civil and political freedom. Indeed, it has now become evident that to achieve that Might which is the only Right acknowledged by lawless men, a nation must rely upon itself for the supply of its own wants. The blockade has already produced new manufacturing enterprises in the Southern States which were never dreamed of before. Our cotton mills will be increased, new forges and foundries set up, workshops of all kinds opened, local efforts in production and manufacture stimulated everywhere, and a universal public sentiment established to use or consume no one thing not grown or manufactured on Southern soil. Direct trade with foreign countries is a thing we shall easily accomplish, for the North was only able to concentrate it through the ease, frequency and friendliness of its communications with the South.

For such an economical policy the South is eminently independent of the North. She need not rely on the North for the raw materials—such as cotton and wool, timber and ores, hides and earths—nor for the products which are now necessaries in civilized life—such as the cereals, sugar and tobacco. She has them all within herself, and when she adopts an economical policy like that which separates the contiguous nations of Europe from each other, she will find it of easier accomplishment than ever has before been found.—On the day that she does this the North will become tributary to the South, and it will puzzle Northern economists to find wherewith to pay for the Southern productions which they must buy—such as sugar and tobacco, cotton and naval stores. These have been hitherto paid for in "Yankee Notions," which will not henceforth pass current in a Southern latitude. The North has none but itself to blame for the ruin that it has brought upon itself, and the prosperity it has unwittingly forced upon the Southern States.

THE SCHOONER TROPIC WIND.—The following note from the British Consulate in this city will be read with interest by merchants and shippers:

BRITISH CONSULATE,
RICHMOND, July 1st, 1861.

To the Editors of the Dispatch:

For the benefit of the merchants and shippers by the British schooner Tropic Wind, lately seized by the blockading fleet in Hampton Roads, and sent as a prize to Washington, I beg to state that official information has reached this office from the British Legation at Washington, which states that the Tropic Wind and her cargo have been released and given back to the charge of the master.

I am, gentlemen, yours very truly,
FRED. J. CRIDLAND.

ANOTHER RESIGNATION.—Among the passengers who arrived at Baltimore from Old Point last Friday, was Lieutenant M. P. JORDAN, of Norfolk, an officer of the U. S. Navy, who arrived at Fortress Monroe on board the steamer Mount Vernon, on Saturday last, from Pensacola. He is on his way to Washington to resign his commission.

POSTMASTER GENERAL REAGAN arrived in New Orleans on the 27th ult., from Texas, and left the next day for Richmond.

VIRGINIA STATE CONVENTION.

SIXTEENTH DAY—[SECOND SESSION].

RICHMOND, July 1, 1861.

The Convention was called to order at the usual hour by Mr. SOUTHALL. Prayer was pronounced by Rev. Mr. HALL.

Mr. MACFARLAND arose and said: The Convention will please give me its attention for a moment, while I refer to a gross misrepresentation which appears in the *Dispatch* of this morning, [in the report of the proceedings of the Convention as reported by the Reporter,] purporting to be a report of a conversation which occurred upon the floor on Saturday last. I say the misrepresentation is gross—gross. If it proceeded from ignorance, the ignorance is pitiable; if it proceeded from design, the malignity is contemptible. I refer to the conversation which occurred between the member from Wetzel (Mr. HALL) and myself. I have called his attention to the statement in the *Dispatch*, and am happy to find that he concurs entirely in the correctness of my recollection. I will read a portion of the report:

"Mr. Hall, of Wetzel, replied to Mr. Macfarland, by remarking that 'fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind.' Mr. Macfarland here desired to know what Mr. Hall meant by his remark. Mr. Hall rejoined, "I meant, sir, just what I said. You and your friends always went with Brown while he was here, and now when he is proved to be a traitor, you wish to vindicate him.'"

The member from Wetzel did use the language "a fellow feeling," as here reported, and when I asked him what he meant, he had the candor to say at once that he had no reference to me. Yet, this simple incident, so easy of comprehension by the plainest capacity, is perverted and made the foundation of injurious insinuations. The gentleman will agree with me in this statement of the facts.

Mr. HALL, of Wetzel.—I will add that my recollection of the conversation referred to, is pretty much in accordance with the facts which the gentleman from Richmond has detailed. When interrogated by him as to what I meant by the expression "a fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind," I certainly stated distinctly that I had no reference to him, and did not intend to reflect upon him.

An ordinance providing that the Banks of the State shall not give credit to the notes of the Banks of States inimical to the Confederate States, by receiving such notes in payment of any public debts, was introduced and laid upon the table. An ordinance was considered giving authority to the citizens of Virginia in camp anywhere in the Confederate States to vote, under certain restrictions, for President and Vice-President of the Confederate States, Carried. An ordinance was submitted providing that loyal citizens in any part of the State who, by reason of military occupation of the county seat by Lincoln's forces, shall be entitled to vote in any other precinct where no such obstructions exist.

Mr. BRANCH, of Petersburg, moved to take up an ordinance providing that all the county and corporation Courts in the State shall have power to enroll and draft into the service of the State, subject to the articles of war, all able-bodied free negroes in the State, and compel them to work on fortifications and works of public defence. Moved to lay on the table. Motion carried.

Mr. FISHER moved that as soon as the same shall be printed, the Secretary shall send to the clerks of the County Courts two, and to the members of this Convention ten, copies of all ordinances of this body. Amended that all ordinances of a penal nature be published in certain newspapers of the State. Rejected. The original ordinance was then passed.

Mr. MORTON moved to take up an ordinance confining to the civil Courts of Richmond the trial of persons suspected of treason who may be brought here by the military authorities of the State. Substitute offered and passed.

Mr. FISHER offered a resolution inhibiting the officer charged with that duty from paying Judge Thompson, of the 20th Judicial District, his salary as such Judge until further orders.

Mr. GOODE submitted an ordinance providing that wherever the words "United States" occur in the Code of Virginia or other laws of the State, the words "Confederate States" shall be substituted therefor. Amended by adding "where applicable." Amendment rejected—original ordinance passed.

Mr. JAMES BARBOUR called the attention of the House to the fact that the Committee on Federal Relations had just had an interview with the President of the Confederation, and he desired the committee to meet this evening at 4½ o'clock, and added that on the main subject of the conference the interview was satisfactory.

An ordinance was then taken up prescribing the oath of allegiance for all officers of the Commonwealth, now or hereafter to be appointed, and that the Court of Appeals or the Judge of the Circuit Court, shall be empowered to declare such offices as refuse to take the prescribed oaths as vacant, and empowering the Governor of the State to remove all such recusants from office who are engaged in the collection of the revenues of the State, and appoint others in their stead.

The hour of two having arrived, a recess was taken till 5 o'clock.

[The Convention at its evening session, adjourned at too late an hour last night to permit us to lay the proceedings before our readers this morning. They will be published tomorrow.]

YANKEE CORN ON GEORGIA LANDS.—Our readers will recollect that much complaint was made some weeks ago by planters who had used grain brought from the North and West in putting in their crops. Its early tasseling seemed to destroy all hope of a yield.—We thought the complaint premature, as we had often used with success the same variety on a small scale for table use. A correspondent residing in Talbot county writes us as follows, under date of the 24th inst.:

"When I wrote you last, I told you a great deal of Northern corn had been planted in this county and those adjoining, and the general opinion was that it would not do for this country. Since that time, some are much in favor of it and express no regrets at having seeded with it. One of my neighbors has fifteen acres of bottom land planted, and thinks the yield will be very heavy.

"Wheat has turned out splendidly, and oats doing the same. Corn looks well, but would do better with rain."—*Sav. Rep*

THE DEFENCES OF THE MISSISSIPPI.—The Memphis Appeal, alluding to the defences of the Mississippi river and the appointment of Brigadier General Polk and Colonel Hardee to the command thereof, says:

General Polk will have the command, as Brigadier General, of the forces mustered into the Confederate service, while General Pillow is in no wise interfered with as Major General of the Tennessee army. At the same time, being relieved from the routine of duties involved in erecting the Mississippi river defences, he will hereafter be able to give more attention to the particular work contemplated in his appointment—that of organizing the gallant army of the Volunteer State.

Major General Pillow and Brigadier General Polk are close and bosom friends, and have been so for twenty years, and our readers can rest assured no conflict can occur between the two officers. We happen to know that General Pillow has applied, with strong prospect of success, to President Davis for orders for higher duty and a position of more importance to the country.

Upon his arrival, General Polk will find the defences erected in the last six weeks, under the order of General Pillow, about completed. They are of such a character as to have met the approval of all military men who have examined them, and to secure the Mississippi Valley from invasion by our Northern enemies.

THE PIRATICAL FLEET.—There are seven vessels at present visible to the naked eye, lying close to Santa Rosa, along the coast of that island. The chartered U. S. steam transport Vanderbilt is amongst the arrivals since Sunday morning, and during last night another large transport, supposed to be the Illinois, arrived at the anchorage. It is thought that the concentration of so many large vessels in the vicinity of Fort Pickens indicates some action on the part of the notorious Harvey Brown, who claims to be the "Commander of all the forces in Florida." Bah! he will soon discover that the greater number are opposed to him and his command. True to the principles of liberty, they can never recognize authority founded upon despotism and the trampling upon human rights and constitutional privileges.—*Pensacola Observer, 25th ult.*

It will be remembered that the Vanderbilt sailed from New York with a miscellaneous cargo, including Billy Wilson's Cut-Throat Regiment.

FROM ALEXANDRIA.—A telegraphic dispatch to the Northern press, dated Alexandria, June 28, says:

Information was received from the Zouave camp this morning, announcing the safe arrival of Lieut. Harrigan and the Captain of the Zouaves, whose absence last night gave rise to fears for their safety. Lieut. Hewitt's company returned at midnight, without meeting the Confederate cavalry. Private Murphy, of campany E, U. S. cavalry, is still missing. The affair at Claud's Mills seems to have been only another attempt to harass our pickets, who are at present the only victims of their warfare, and to notify us of their presence. They made only two captures, neither of whom were prepared for resistance when pounced upon by about fifteen cavalry from a side road. Private Murphy, of the U. S. cavalry, was for the moment off his horse. The other, a Zouave, was engaged in picking cherries, and without his arms. Another portion of the Confederate cavalry, about forty strong, drove in the United States pickets to within a mile of Claud's Mills, and then retired, without succeeding in making any other captures.

The Engagements at Aquia Creek—A Gallant Defence—Highly Interesting Statements—The Results of the Achievement.

To the Editors of the Dispatch:—What has surprised me more than anything else in these days of exaggeration, when every little skirmish is magnified into a battle, is that so little has been thought of the repeated attacks upon, and, in particular, the three days' terrific cannonade of, the little sand-bag battery at Game Point, Aquia Creek. For so glorious a result, with such means of resistance to the attacking force, I know nothing to be compared to it.

The main cause, perhaps, of this undervaluation, (to use a mercantile phrase,) may be attributed to the unsatisfactory official report, which gave a brief account, as of nothing extraordinary, of what was indeed a glorious victory.

I happened to be at the Creek on the evening when the first attack was made by a single steamer, since ascertained to be the Freeborn. This attack, as I heard an officer say, was evidently only designed to get the range of our guns, as only about a dozen shots were exchanged. One of the enemy's rifled shells passed through the redoubt and exploded in the officers' quarters, beneath the Captain's bed, and demolished everything in the apartment. By the fragment of another shell, one man was slightly wounded in the hand. This was the only casualty.

It was taken for granted that another attack would be made. I went the following day to the Point, but everything was quiet, excepting that our boys were busy strengthening their redoubt, by throwing up additional quantities of sand in front. The next day (Friday) I again rode over after breakfast, and had no sooner reached the range of hills which overlook the point, than I saw that something interesting was about to take place. In addition to the Freeborn, there were two other armed steamers, one of them, however, a small tug, which were evidently preparing for an attack. Soon after 10 o'clock they approached and opened fire, which was steadily returned by our battery of two guns.

In about half an hour after the action began, the Purcell battery, of four small rifled guns, was brought to the height near which I stood, and opened upon the enemy, and some of its shot must have struck him, for he immediately returned its fire, and did so from time to time while the fight lasted.

In the meantime the shot were flying into and the shell were bursting over our little battery on the point, and several times we thought that it was destroyed; but when our fears had grown almost to certainties, the boom of the gun would tell that our defenders maintained their post. About half-past 1 the enemy withdrew. Our men were wholly unhurt; what injury the enemy sustained we could not tell; but it must have been considerable, as he was repeatedly struck.

Soon after the fight, one of the steamers went up the river; it was supposed to procure assistance, and the supposition proved correct. On Saturday morning a large three-masted steamer, which proved to be the Pawnee, mounting 14 heavy guns, had joined the squadron of the day before, and all were evidently preparing for an attack. The manner in which our men had maintained their post the day before satisfied me that they would do their best; but I regarded their annihilation as certain when I looked upon the overwhelming force arrayed against them.

Owing, it was said, to the small amount of ammunition, the Purcell battery was not this day brought into action, but one of the guns was placed in the Game Point battery. Only think—two large and one small rifled gun, looking like a 6-pounder, against four steamers, one with 14 guns, heavier than those in the battery, and the others carrying as many in the aggregate—some of them rifled ones.

Just before the first shot was fired, the building at the extremity of the wharf was set on fire and the bridge leading to it blown up by the defenders. Between 11 and 12 the battle began, and continued for five mortal hours; and when the cannonade and the conflagration were at their height, the grandest spectacle was exhibited which I have ever seen or expect to see, and I wish that every lover of the sublime could have been there. The incessant flashes through a sheet of flame, the eddying smoke, and the hiss and whiz of ball and shell hurling and bursting in the air, with the loud reports reverberating among the hills, made us, as I have said, tremble for the little band which was literally girdled with fire.

But there was a flag-staff beside the redoubt, and our hearts were cheered as, from time to time, through the lifting smoke, we saw that our flag was triumphantly waving. "Poor fellows!" we exclaimed, again and again, as a shell burst apparently in the very midst of the battery; but, in a moment, the report of a gun would tell that enough, at least, were left to defend it.

The enemy hauled off, leaving a partially demolished sand-bank, with its defenders unscathed behind it. His loss must have been severe as evinced by the number of times he was struck and the precipitation of his retreat—a retreat which received a salute of three cheers and a parting shot from the little garrison.

For the disparity of force, and the quantity of ammunition expended by the enemy in so brief a space of time, the defence of Game Point I consider unparalelled in the annals of modern warfare.

To sum up the injury known to have been sustained by the enemy, the Anacosta was so much injured that the carpenters who surveyed her pronounce that she cannot be repaired. The Pawnee is admitted to have been eight times struck—one of them a raking shot, which dismounted two of her guns. The Freeborn took up twenty-one dead bodies—Among them, it is reported that of the 2d Lieutenant of the Pawnee—and there were upwards of fifty wounded—among them, the Commander of the latter vessel.

The results of the achievement cannot be two highly estimated. Had the battery been silenced, Gen. Scott, in pursuance of his plan, would have fortified the railroad, taken possession of Fredericksburg, therefrom take the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, cut off the communication between our Northern army, and marched with his hordes directly upon the Capital.

AN EYE-WITNESS.

THE READ SHELL IN THE FIGHT AT BETHEL.—From late accounts of this spirited combat, it appears that the rifle shells invented by our townsman, Dr. Read, rendered efficient aid in discomfiting the invaders of the Old Dominion.

The Howitzer Battery, under Col. Magruder, did good service; but the prominent place is assigned to a Parrott gun, firing the Read shells, which were purchased last year by the Military Commissioners of Virginia.

These shells, it seems, were fired with much precision, and exploded with such fatal effects in the ranks of the enemy as to render the working of the hostile artillery almost impossible.

The Parrott guns, prudently provided by Virginia, were cast iron six-pounders, manufactured and rifled expressly for firing the Read shells. We do not wonder that they should have made their mark at Bethel, as we have just inspected a table of practice with one of these same guns at West Point, last summer, showing that a shell weighing nine and a half pounds, fired with only one pound of powder, ranged two miles and a quarter at 15 deg. elevation, and at 35 deg. elevation struck three miles and a half from the gun.

If such results can be attained with the Read shells from small field-pieces, weighing but nine hundred pounds, what may we not expect when our ten-inch Columbiads and heavy Dahlgren guns are rifled and furnished with similar projectiles as they readily may be by our Southern foundries?—*Tuscaloosa Observer.*

A SLAP AT GEN. MCCLELLAN.—The Washington correspondent of the New York Tribune thus hits at Major General McClellan:

Kentucky comes within the angle of incidence. The train of peace-makers, bearing palms and singing pastorals, with the venerable bell-wether, Mr. Crittenden, in the van, is hailed by a flourish of trumpets from the lips of Major General McClellan. He has concluded an enduring truce. When Gen. Harney was baited into a similar trap in Missouri, it was supposed no other General would be immediately led into a pitfall; but we are to live and learn with each diurnal paving out of our mortal coil. When Gen. McClellan telegraphed to Washington some weeks ago for permission to buy fifty dollars' worth of pine lumber for a camp-chapel, there were many who believed that he would wield the sword of the spirit with more muscle than the carnal weapon of Ames & Co.'s manufacture. His genius is not war, but negotiation. He shines in diddled diplomacy, and is second in the order of Generals who preach peace on earth and good will to men.

GEN. JOHNSON.—The Winchester Virginian, of the 28th ult., says:

If there be those who desire information as to the whereabouts of Gen. Johnson's army, we will inform them that it is all about in spots—just where it ought to be. It is certainly not at Harper's Ferry—nor can we say it is at Winchester—although we saw one or two regiments pass through town yesterday. For further information, inquire of Abe Lincoln.

The same paper says:

Some of our friends express fears that Lincoln's troops will take possession of Harper's Ferry. For one, we say, let them come and take it. They may now station there fifty thousand troops, for all we care.

FIRE-ARMS.—Messrs A. B Barrett & Co., proprietors of the Southwestern Foundry, at this place, have recently commenced the manufacture of fire-arms. They have about twenty hands now employed, and are turning out at this time *ten rifles a day*. When they get their machinery in complete order, which we are assured will be in a few days, they will be able to turn out from 25 to 30 guns per day. The guns manufactured by these gentlemen have been inspected and approved by competent judges. So far as we ourselves are capable of judging, we have no hesitancy in saying that they are as good rifles as can be made anywhere. We understand that it is the intention of Gen. Floyd to supply his Brigade with the Barrett rifle.—*Wytheville Telegraph.*

Vandalism in Northwest Virginia.

We find the following account of the doings of the Ohio and Pennsylvania troops, who have invaded Northwest Virginia, as given by their own organ in Wheeling. To wreak vengeance on these wretches at their own homes will be for all Virginians a labor of love:

THE MOVEMENTS IN WESTERN VIRGINIA—MEN KILLED AND WOUNDED.

The Wheeling Intelligencer (Republican) has the following letter narrating the exploits of the Federal troops in Western Virginia:

SHINNSTON, VA., June 22.—Yesterday a detachment of Ohio troops, under Capt. Calle, of the 20th regiment, company I, arrived here from Mannington, via Hesaville and Lumbersport, at which last place they took several prisoners. Shortly after nightfall Capt. Calle detached a squad of men to go down to Righter's, under the guidance of two of our citizens. On arriving at Righter's house Captain Calle left his men in the yard, and advanced to the door, but could not gain admittance. In a few moments a signal was heard at the back of the house, and instantly about seventy or eighty rebels, who had been collected and concealed by Righter in the orchard, rushed around the corner of the house and fired on Capt Calle and his men, wounding one in the breast another in the arm, and wounding Jno Nay, one of our citizens very badly in the groin. On this attack the troops fired and dispersed, leaving Nay and the man wounded in the breast lying on the ground. They were afterwards carried to Nay's father's, who lives about half a mile from Righter's. The one wounded in the breast has since died. The ball has been extracted from Nay's wound, and it is thought he will recover.

Capt. C. before daylight this morning, dispatched messengers to Clarksburg and went himself to Fairmont. He returned about noon to-day, with about 250 men—went to Righter's, great numbers of our citizens accompanying. They found the premises deserted. The troops entered his house and appropriated everything they thought would be useful. They then set fire to the house (which you know is one of the finest in this section of the country,) to the stables, barn, and all the outbuildings, and they were consumed in one general conflagration. I was present and witnessed it. They then took all the horses on the farm, several wagons and buggies, loaded the wounded men into them and moved to Mannington. Another company from Fairmont went to Worthington.—About 150 came down from Clarksburg this afternoon, and in company with a body of Home Guards from Simpson's creek, went over to the Coon's run country just after dark. Their object is to form a sort of ring hunt and close in on Righter's posse. I think the expedition will be successful.

One incident occurred at Righter's, at the sacking of the premises, that I must not omit. Our troops had one Banks Corban (a noted rebel) prisoner. While they were gutting him, he (being on horseback) started off as if to escape. They commanded him to halt twice, but he paid no attention. They again told him to stop or they would shoot him from his horse. Instead of complying he put spurs to his horse and attempted to escape. The captain ordered his men to fire on him, when about a hundred obeyed, at least fifty balls striking him in the back, and nearly cutting him in two. He fell from his horse, lifeless, not knowing what hurt him.

The Intelligencer remarks, editorially, that Nay is supposed to be mortally wounded, and that four or five of his friends were fired on and three killed. The property destroyed at Righter's was very valuable. The residence was a very fine one, and the horses and other stock on the farm, (which is one of the best in Marion county,) are of superior quality. Mr R. lived like a prince, but now all is destroyed.

Hessian Villainy.

A Yankee, named Stephens, Adjutant of one of the Vermont Regiments, thus speaks of his exploits while on the road to Great Bethel:

On reaching the bend of the road I took a survey of the rear, to "see what I might see," and discovered a single soldier coming towards me, and waited for him to come up.—I found it was Clark, of the Bradford company. Before he reached me, I observed a horseman coming at full speed towards me.—On reaching the house he turned in, which induced me to think him a Secessionist. I ordered Clark to cover him with his rifle, and, revolver in hand, ordered him to dismount and surrender. He cried out, "Who are you?" answer, "Vermont!" "Then raise your piece, Vermont; I am Col. Duryea, of the Zouaves;" and so it was. His gay looking red boys just appeared turning the corner of the road, coming towards us. He asked me the cause of the firing in the rear, and whose premises we were on. I told him he knew the first as well as I did, but as to the last could give full information; that the house belonged to one Adjutant Whiting, who, just before, had sent a bullet whizzing by me, and shot one of my boys, and that my greatest pleasure would be to burn the rascal's house in payment. "Your wish will be gratified at once," said the Colonel. "I am ordered by Gen. Butler to burn every house whose occupant or owner fires upon our troops. Burn it." He leaped from his horse, and I upon the steps, and by that time three Zouaves were with me. I ordered them to try the door with the buts of their guns; down went the door, and in we went. A well packed traveling-bag lay upon a mahogany table. I tore it open with the hopes of finding a revolver, but did not. The first thing I took out was a white linen coat; I laid it on the table, and Colonel Duryea put a lighted match to it. Other clothing was added to the pile, and soon we had a rousing fire. Before leaving I went into the large parlor in the right wing of the house; it was perfectly splendid. A large room with a tapestry carpet, a nice piano, a fine library of miscellaneous books, rich sofas, elegant chairs with superior needle-work wrought bottoms, what-nots in the corners, loaded with articles of luxury, taste and refinement, and upon a mahogany centre-table lay a Bible and a lady's portrait. The last two articles I took, and have them now in my possession. I also took a decanter of most excellent old brandy from the sideboard, and left the burning house.

The last number of the Winchester Virginian contains the following:

When Lincoln's thieves crossed the Potomac river, at Williamsport, they visited the house of a wealthy gentleman, of Berkeley county, named Cunningham, who, with his family, (except a large number of negroes,) left the premises. The rogues ransacked the house from top to bottom, taking everything that suited their fancy. In the eating line, they went so far as to take old hen turkeys off their nests (poor as Job's) and cooked the eggs which had been set on for weeks. A large tub of sour milk, in which the ladies had been soaking petticoats, for whitening purposes, the starved puppies drank up as voraciously as ever famished hounds lapped butter-milk.

They endeavored to persuade the negroes to leave their master, but the Africans were so disgusted with their conduct and filthy appearance, that they scorned to have anything to do with such trash. One of the blacks stole off some valuable papers belonging to his master and hid them, to save them from spoliation by the wretched vandals.

ATTEMPT TO ASSASSINATE.—On Thursday evening last, as Mr. Wm. Rhett was returning in a buggy from his farm, not far from Charleston, he was fired upon by a person concealed on the opposite side of the road, near the Six mile House. A portion of the charge, which was large-sized duck shot, entered his back, left arm and left leg, wounding him in a serious and painful manner. Although he heard the discharge of the piece and felt a shock, he was not immediately conscious of being shot. A man of large size and dark complexion was observed to run off by a person riding a little distance behind. Circumstances point strongly to a laborer employed on a neighboring farm, who had recently been brought before a magistrate for trespasses by Mr. Rhett, as the perpetrator of the crime, and he has been arrested and lodged in jail.—*Charleston Mercury.*

STARVING OUT.—The crop of wheat in the Valley of Virginia, from all that we have seen and heard, will be decidedly the best that has been harvested for the last ten years. It not only stands uncommonly thick upon the ground, but it is of a very superior quality. The corn, owing to a very wet spring, is backward; but an unusual quantity has been planted, and, with a continued good season, a very heavy yield may be anticipated. The idea of starving out the South is amusing. After supplying the wants of all our people, we would have sufficient left to feed the half-starved, lantern-jawed hyenas of the North, with such prodigality as to kill them all in six months with apoplexy.—*Winchester Republican.*

EXECUTION.—The Pensacola Tribune, of the 25th ult., says: "Two notorious characters, Medlock and Etheridge, who, in the capacity of Murrell men, have been infesting the counties adjoining the State line of Alabama and Florida, were on Sunday last, about 10 o'clock, hung by citizens several miles from this city, on the line of the Railroad. Medlock had been confined in jail in Pensacola, several months ago, but escaped. There were about 40 or 50 persons present at the hanging, and we learn that everything was conducted very well. The trap-door was thrown by a negro. The citizens of our county will no doubt be relieved now, that these men are executed."

FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS REWARD.—M. S. Hedrick, the agent in New Orleans of the Virginia Sewing Machine Company, offers five hundred dollars reward for the capture and delivery into his hands of the flag presented by the Wheeler & Wilson sewing machine company, of New York, to Company D, Thirteenth Regiment New York State Militia.—This presents a fine opportunity for some of our gallant volunteers in Virginia of making a pile, when they come in contact with the New York Sepoys.

LOCAL MATTERS.

Destructive Fire.—The alarm of fire at six o'clock yesterday evening was caused by a dense volume of smoke proceeding from the interior of the Penitentiary, which was found to be caused by the burning of the carpenter shop attached to the institution, and the flames spreading, in the absence of any means for its prevention, soon set fire to the other large shops located in proximity to the above, which, after burning for several hours, were, with their contents, reduced to ashes. The loss to the State we should judge to be at least fifty thousand dollars, the greater part of which might have been saved had water been abundant. The location of the State's prison is peculiarly unfortunate in respect to its means of obtaining water for extinguishing conflagrations that may be set agoing by the machinations of convicts. The fire yesterday evening was the work of some one of the inmates, no doubt.—The prisoners at the time of the above casualty were doing good service to the State and Southern Confederacy, by manufacturing goods for the use of the army. We presume that their exertions will be put at an end for some time to come. That is the reason, no doubt, that incited some one of them to fire the building. The burning of the Penitentiary workshops is a great loss to the State at this juncture—more so than such an occurrence could possibly have been happening at any other time.—We did not hear of the escape of any of the prisoners. Col. Pendleton, the worthy Superintendent, exerted himself with zeal and effect to prevent the spread of the flames. He was aided by a large number of volunteer citizens, as well as soldiers. It will be impossible, we presume, to supply the loss of looms in the weaving departments, the machines having been obtained in New York. A violent rain which fell during the fire, tended a little to stay its progress.

Mayor's Court, Yesterday.—The Mayor yesterday detained for further examination John Ross and Jackson Palmer, charged with stabbing Augustus P. Girard in the back with a bayonet. The complainant did not make his appearance.—Henry R. Beasley, Tim Hogan, Jas. Gitrille, Dan Mitchell, Geo. Lott, Mike Winters, Jas. Ryan, and Jno. Ryan, arrested for various drunks and acts consequent thereon, were admonished and delivered to their officers, being soldiers.—Jas. D. Founkhold, arrested for chasing people out of Palmore's drinking saloon with a drawn sabre, was detained for want of surety of the peace.—Patrick H. Connell was committed for a breach of the peace.—Charles, slave of Mrs. Jas. Ellett, was ordered 30 lashes for breaking into Philip Bergheimer's store and stealing $40. Edward Fitzgerald, charged with robbing a slave of $7, was committed to jail until the 2d of July.—Blackstone, slave of Henry Thweatt, was ordered 30 lashes for assaulting Wm. Maxwell in the street with a brick.—Eleven negroes, arrested for vagrancy, non-payment of taxes, &c., were sent to jail, where, as the prospects opens for their being put to work, they will doubtless purge themselves of the charge of vagrancy by paying their taxes, and thus escape work. "Sensible to the last."

Reported Death of a Citizen—Messrs. Blair & Chamberlain, of this city, received a telegraphic dispatch