Richmond Dispatch.

FRIDAY MORNING.....FEB. 7, 1862.

Our Treatment of Prisoners.

The protest we made a few days ago against the Prison Inspecting Committee, insolently appointed on a mission of espionage to the South by the Lincoln Government, has met the universal endorsement of the Southern press and public; and the most lively satisfaction is everywhere expressed at the prompt determination of the Confederate authorities to refuse admission within our lines to the Commissioners selected.

What right have these people to complain of any treatment their prisoners are receiving at our hands, supposing it to be ever so barbarous? With what decency can they ask permission to look into the condition of our prisons or their inmates? Those prisoners came into our country in their own wrong, on the most brutal and savage errand. They came upon our territory, to the doors of our homes, to shoot down our people, to outrage our women, to plunder our property, and to excite our slaves to insurrection. They came to let loose all the furies upon our heads, and to roam and run riot with fire and faggot over the land. We caught the savage intruders in the act. We should have been justified in putting them instantly to death. We should have executed a righteous vengeance upon them, if we had, after the manner of the aboriginal savages of the forest, tied them to stakes, and, amid dances and rejoicings, put them by slow and excruciating torture to death. They chose to outlaw us from the pale of humanity, and avowed their purpose to deal with us as infamous persons whose existence was a curse to the earth. They repudiated the thought of allowing us the amenities of civilized warfare. They banished humanity and Christian moderation from their purposes, and came to exterminate us as beasts and brutes of the forest. All this was before we had caught their prisoners.

We had a right to take them at their own word, and, if we were to encounter the treatment and fate of outlaws, to retort upon them the desperate resistance usual with *hostes humani generis*. They were two or three to one, their men alone came against us, and our wives and children were to meet a common fate with ourselves. They came in their pride, expecting to execute upon us the ferocious intentions with which they set out. They were driven back, and many of them, less swift of foot than the rest, fell into our hands. We captured them by thousands. There was no late our ingenuity and just anger could have invented which would have been too severe for them. We might have hoisted the black flag of the pirate and outlaw, and refused all quarter. We might have maimed and left them lying upon the ground, to become a living prey to wolves and buzzards. We might, in mock humanity, have washed their wounds with vitriol, and poulticed them with pepper. We might have pinched their flesh with hot irons, and practiced upon them those very cruelties which their lying tongues had so often accused us of visiting upon our slaves. We might have buried them alive, and, with a refinement of savagery, have inserted tubes from the surface, and by protracting respiration, protracted the awful fate to which we thus consigned them.

But none of these things did we do. We returned good for evil; we chose the part of good Samaritans. We gathered together their wounded and sick in hospitals, and we decently buried their dead when their defeated comrades had not the humanity and decency to ask to bury them themselves. Their Government, with unexampled brutality, had declared all medicines contraband of war, and prohibited their introduction within our boundaries. Notwithstanding this infamous decree, we administered to them, of our scanty supplies, insufficient for our own sick, that which their own Government thus denied them, though costing us four prices; and in all respects did we care for them as we cared for the brave sick and wounded who had been fighting for our liberty and security. The lives of our own sick and wounded soldiers were very precious in our sight, and their comfort and recovery were very near to our hearts; but not even these cherished men received a kindlier attention, than those who had come to slay, violate, rob, ruin, and exterminate us.

Since the period when thousands of these hired emissaries fell into our hands, it has suited the tactics of the enemy to assume a less savage tone towards our cause and people. The "pirates," taken on our privateers, which they would have ignominiously hung up by the neck amid the shouts of an exultant mob, have gradually been metamorphosed into "prisoners" of war, and, in order to extricate their own prisoners among us from the fate which they know we could make as severe as we desired, they are willing to exchange man for man.

That measure we will consent to; but when, with hypocritical professions of philanthropy and affected solicitude for soldiers of whom their cold-hearted race refused to bury the dead, they would send deputations to confer with their prisoners and to spy out our resources and defences, it is proper that we should rebuke them by a prompt and contemptuous refusal of their command.

The Demands of the Crisis.

The South should henceforth sternly set her face against the natural disposition to look for assistance from Europe, and to expect others to do for us what we ought to do for ourselves. That the Western nations of Europe will, sooner or later, open the blockade, we have not now, any more than we have ever had, a shadow of a doubt. But great bodies proverbially move slowly, and it would be unreasonable to expect prudent and sagacious Governments, whatever their interests or sympathies, to involve themselves in the consequence of an opening of the blockade, without such a guarantee of our capacity to maintain our independence as only our own acts can give. They wait for us; if we wait for them, it will induce a degree of lethargy and security among ourselves which will lead to disaster, and render even more distant and doubtful the period of our recognition. We should not allow ourselves to be lulled to false security by the increasing apprehensions expressed by the Northern press of European intervention on behalf of the South. That there is ground for these apprehensions, we fully believe; but, to make them certain, we must bestir ourselves, and be prepared at least to maintain our own in the present struggle. We are aware that there is no abatement of zeal among our people, and that the flame of patriotism burns among the masses with a steady and increasing light. But our legislators and Congressional representatives must act speedily in providing for the military defence of the country. Instead of permitting any diminution of our forces on the frontier, already inferior to the enemy in everything but courage, constancy, and virtue, we should provide for a large and immediate increase of our forces. In this connexion, the measure of first importance is that which concerns the re-enlistment of volunteers.

This momentous question is one which after all, must depend upon the patriotism of the volunteers themselves, though the Legislature and Congress may, by wise action, greatly facilitate that result. However we may supply a diminution of numbers from this source, it is unquestionably true that we cannot supply the efficiency and discipline of the brave men who have for nearly a year so heroically and successfully defended the fireside and the homes of the South from invasion and defilement. We can well understand that the volunteers have had severe trials of their patience and their temper, not only in the great hardships which they have undergone, and the monotonous inaction of camp life, but in the intense selfishness which has been manifested by greedy speculators who have not only refrained from aiding the Southern cause in any way, either in person or by contribution, but have greedily and basely speculated upon the wants of those who were defending their homes and property at the peril of their lives. It is hard for the bravest men to toil on amid such discouragements as this, imagining, perhaps, that the whole country, as well as these sharpers, are looking with indifference upon their fate, and only using the war as an engine for the aggrandizement of their individual fortunes. Such a supposition would, however, do great injustice to the masses of the Southern people. It is only a certain class, greedy harpies, who are to be found in every country, and who are a disgrace to humanity, who speculate upon the necessities of the whole community as well as the soldiery, and are indifferent to their sufferings, their trials, and their glories.—It may at least be said of the helpless class, of the mothers, wives, and daughters of the South, who have labored incessantly for the comfort of the soldiers since the beginning of the war, who have nursed them in sickness, and provided by their cheerful and patient industry for the clothing of the volunteers, that they at least are free from the imputation of selfishness, and that they deserve to be defended from the licentious and brutal invaders who have threatened to bring upon every Southern home a fate which is more horrible than death. We feel sure that, were their physical power equal to their disinterested patriotism, an army of women might be organized in the South who would never permit the ruthless invader to advance another foot upon Southern soil. Let our brave volunteers set off the unselfish love of country of that vast majority of the community, who have no means of protecting themselves, against the greedy rapacity of speculators and birds of prey, and then decide which class should be permitted to influence their future action.

In regard to the inaction entailed upon our armies by a defensive policy, it ought to be recollected that, trying as it is to the spirit of an ardent and chivalric soldiery, it has at all events thus far preserved our independence and saved our soil from subjugation. This has been the glorious result of that virtue of patience and endurance which is even more difficult than active courage, and which has thus far shed a lustre upon Southern character not inferior to that which has been achieved by their matchless prowess. Our enemies, as well as the world at large, have been sorely disappointed in the exhibition of this quality by the soldiers of the South. They had predicted that they would make an impetuous rush in battle, and make for a time a great dash and display, but that they would soon become demoralized by inaction, and demonstrate an utter want of patience and stability. On the contrary, our men have hitherto shown a fortitude equal to their courage, and have patiently submitted to privations and delays more harassing than the perils of the battle-field. We cannot believe that at the critical juncture now approaching they will fulfill the malicious expectations of their enemies, and permit the Southern cause to perish on the very banks of Jordan, in sight of the promised land. For that cause is literally in sight of all that they have been fighting and suffering for, and no one with any capacity of reason pretends that the war can be protracted beyond the end of the present year, if our armies still stand to their colors. All that they have fought for is nearly achieved; the exchequer of the [illegible]ch is exhausted, its patience is nearly [illegible]aken down; and the great Powers of Western Europe will not much longer brook the inability of the North to open the ports of the South to the commercial world. A little more patience in well doing and the end is achieved, and they by whom it is achieved will return permanently to homes which they have made independent and happy, but which will again be endangered and perhaps destroyed, just on the verge of glorious redemption, if our tried and heroic armies take their hands from the plough of battle.

The Late A. S. Willington.

In the death of A. S. Willington, Esq., senior proprietor of the Charleston *Courier*, the Southern press has lost its oldest editor. Mr. Willington was a native of New England, but had resided since the beginning of the century in the South. His journal has always been one of high and deserved influence, a model newspaper, full of ability and interest, and uniformly free from personalities and bigoted partisanship, dignified and high-toned. Richard Yeadon, Esq., a distinguished member of the Charleston bar, and a noble-hearted Southern gentleman, has long been the leading editor of the *Courier*, and has contributed greatly by his powerful pen and elevated personal character to its success and influence. We see it stated that James Gordon Bennett began his career as a printer in the *Courier* office. We can scarcely imagine a greater contrast in the lives of two men than those of Mr. Willington and Bennett. The latter has acquired vast wealth and an infamous notoriety, his gray hairs, instead of a crown of righteousness, are more like the ghastly illumination that exhales from the corruption of graves. The other has made his journal a blessing to society, and has the consolation in death that, in a long career of such responsibility as attaches to a profession which, for good or evil, is not surpassed in its influence by any other, he has "writ no line which dying he would wish to blot."

GEO. PEABODY ESQ., OF LONDON—*Another Great Benevolent Project.*—A letter from the Hon. Thurlow Weed, dated London, January 12, has the following:

After breakfasting this morning I went to the great American banker, George Peabody, Esq., who retires from business before long, and is endeavoring to do good with his large fortune. While, of course, I am not at liberty to speak of what is to remain sealed, I may say that he is just now maturing a plan for disposing of $500,000 in a way that, should the opportunity be afforded, will prove permanently precious to the unfortunate and destitute of London, and beneficial in other and important respects.

CAN A HUSBAND OPEN A WIFE'S LETTER?—There was a curious case on trial at the United States District Court in Albany last week. A man and his wife living in the western part of the State had separated by mutual consent. During this period the husband opened a letter written to his wife. He was arrested for this, at her instigation, several months since, and the trial took place last week. The jury brought him in guilty. The Judge sentenced him to twenty-four hours' imprisonment in the county jail, and a fine of $10.

ARMS SEIZED IN MEXICO.—The Cuban papers all denounce the stone blockade of Lincoln. Havana papers, of the 17th, say that an American vessel arrived at Vera Cruz with 1,000 English muskets and a quantity of gunpowder, intended for the Mexican Government, but the allied Generals confiscated the whole of it. Two batteries of rifled guns were expected every day from the same quarter, and will share, of course, the same fate.

During the month of January there was coined at the Philadelphia Mint 270,000 gold coins and 1,152,800 silver coins, and 1,300,000 cents, of a total value of $654,[illegible].

FROM THE EMACIATE!

[OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

Disappointment—The Dry Dock—Arrival of the Yankees from Freeborn's Cut—Want of Confidence in a Commanding Officer—The Mill Creek Battle, &c.

SAVANNAH, GA., Feb. 2, 1862.

My last letter was written after a dry of considerable excitement, and I really looked for the attack of Yankees upon the works about Fort Jackson during the week; but a fortunate chance has driven them away. I call it a chance, for it certainly did not result from any preconceived design on the part of our military commanders.

On Wednesday, the dry dock was taken into St. Augustine Creek, to be sunk in the way of the approach of the Federal gunboats; but on the first sight of the huge monster approaching, the fleet Yankees hoisted anchor and steamed away from the presence of the dreaded battery. They have suggested to us the only proper and efficient use to be made of the dock, and one which, no doubt, will be soon effected. It is capable to support a battery of heavy guns, and can be in a short time made stronger and more formidable. The dock has not been kept in its destined position, the force of the tidal current having veered it about in all directions before the morning of Thursday.

I can at least chronicle the retreat of all the Yankee vessels from Freeborn's Cut, on the Georgia side of the river, but they still maintain their position at the Mouth of Wall's Cut, on the opposite side. And I can further derive this benefit from the near approach of the enemy, that it has infused some more energy in to our authorities here; they have been diligent in completing the batteries on the river, opposite Fort Jackson, and the one on Hutchinson's Island, just below this city, and have put Pulaski in a condition to withstand a siege, which should have been done long since.

In your notice of the present position of affairs about Savannah, you are not wrong in saying that the gun-boats did not reach St. Augustine Creek; but they could have come up as far as the battery, at Thunderbolt, to avoid which they passed the creek, and continued to the North of Wilmington Island, and entered Freeborn's Cut, a small creek, running about two miles from the main river and nearly parallel with its course, coming out in St. Augustine Creek, near its confluence with the Savannah, and but a very short distance below Fort Jackson.—Your readers may rest assured that it is a mere matter of time when the enemy shall enter our river; but as I have already expressed my opinion, derived from competent authority, when they shall have reached it, and shall command the city, it would be impossible to hold it with any force they can bring. Great loss may be entailed upon us, since, though no advantage would accrue to the enemy, their malice might suggest the punishment of the rebellious city. Such a proceeding would be in accordance with the antecedents of the infamous invader, who has not hesitated at the perpetration of any outrage that their fiendish malice might dictate.

I have hitherto been cautious in mentioning the many injurious reports circulated, and the decidedly unfavorable opinion in which Gen. Lawton is held by the citizens of Savannah. I have failed to meet one person who was bold enough to maintain the capacity of the commanding officer. I mention this now not intending to form any opinion of the justice of the judgment, but merely incidentally to remark that much of the *panic* which prevailed last Monday, and of the general feeling of insecurity, originates with this want of confidence in the superior officer at this post. At this time, when the enemy knocks at our very gates, and has approached in full view of the city, energy, daring, and consummate skill are absolutely necessary in the conduct of the defence, and without these qualifications the appointees of the Government will certainly fail to receive the support of the community, and tend to weaken the hold which the Administration has upon the affections of the people.

The General has frequently been made the object of attack through placards. One some time since purported to be a dispatch from Pulaski to the effect that he designed to abandon the Fort and take up his position on Lookout Mountain, (in Tennessee,) the better to observe the movements of the foe. Frequently, in troublous times like these, evil reports and dissatisfaction become contagious, and extend much beyond the legitimate objects of just complaint; and in this view it is not unreasonable to suppose that General Lawton has suffered beyond his demerits.

The telegraphic report of the loss of a large portion of Burnside's fleet has been received here with great satisfaction, and the hope is entertained that the forty missing may never be accounted for this side of the gulf which shall end all time. The remainder will be properly cared for by the brave Carolinians, and for each and all of them, should they venture to advance into the country, the same unmarked grave will wait.

We have received some information from Nashville in regard to the Mill Creek battle and the reputed traitorous designs of Gen. Crittenden, which caused a general feeling of sadness to pervade the community; but I believe further and official action has been waited before a judgment has been rendered in his case. It is hard for the honest, open, generous Southron to believe that treachery can exist within the ranks of his countrymen, and he is loth to credit the terrible aspersion which has befallen the fair fame of a once gallant soldier.

Some time since, while the action of the Lincoln Government still threatened war with England, and the consequent raising of the blockade was weighing in the balance, quite large sales of cotton took place in the upper portion of this State, at very fair prices; but of course this has been stopped since the disgraceful back-down of the cowardly miscreant at the head of the Washington Department of State. About this city no business at all exists, and, except in the vicinity of the foundries, stagnation reigns supreme. These works are kept constantly active, and frequently into the night, in the preparations of various little toys for the Confederate Government, wherewith to amuse the Yankees. Every variety of work is being executed in them, and with a facility and energy hitherto unknown. I will not particularise the many kinds of work on which they are engaged; suffice it to say, that at some future time you will be fully apprised of their effects.

I see that Virginia has again met her sterling coupons due in London on the 1st of January, and the Yankees even admit the unimpeachable integrity of your noble State in her determined effort to maintain her honor and fame untarnished. The effect of this in Europe will redound not only to the benefit of Virginia, but to that of the Confederacy also; it cannot fail to impress upon the monetary world the high sense of honor which the Mother of States entertains of the prompt payment of her obligations amidst the sacrifices involved in her present conflict.

MERCURY.

INCENDIARIES IN POCAHONTAS.—On the 25th of January, the stables of Mr. M. B. Gillian, of Mill Point, Pocahontas county, were consumed. Five very valuable horses, a considerable quantity of rye, oats, and other articles, were burnt. His loss is supposed to be about $1,800. There is no doubt but that it was the work of an incendiary.—*Staunton Spectator.*

DIAMOND TEETH.—It is stated that a brilliant idea has just been conceived among the nabobs of New York, three of whom appeared on Sunday in a church on the Fifth Avenue, having their front teeth set with diamonds.

The Government of Prussia has granted Carl Schurz, who is a political exile from that country, special permission to visit his native land.

Nicholas Rice, Esq., register of wills for Talbott county, Md., died last week.

LOCAL MATTERS.

Called Court.—A called Court of Hustings, consisting of Aldermen Timberlake, Smith, Bray, Anderson, Lipscomb, and Binford, assembled yesterday, at 11 o'clock, at the City Hall, to examine John Hagan for alleged extortion in the matter of obtaining money from Jas. Evans. The warrant of Recorder Caskie, calling the Court, states "that John Hagan, on 2d of January, in said city, (of Richmond,) feloniously by false pretences, then and there made by him to one James Evans; that he, the said John Hagan, was then and there a public officer, authorized by law to procure free negroes to work on the batteries and fortifications then being erected for the defence of the city of Richmond, and to accept substitutes to work in the place of the said free negroes, and to compound with said free negroes for their labor on said batteries and fortifications, by receiving money from them in place of said labor, did obtain from the said James Evans the sum of forty dollars with intent to defraud."

The evidence in this case has been given pretty fully heretofore, and we do not deem it necessary to reproduce it. A portion only was heard yesterday, the Court adjourning after a partial examination, until this morning. Colonel James Lyons and Mr. John S. Caskie appeared for Mr. Hagan; Mr. Daniel for the Commonwealth.

Charges of Unjustifiable Assault.—Thomas Goodrich was arraigned before the Mayor yesterday for getting drunk and assaulting James McGee in his house, the Beauregard Saloon, 14th street, on Wednesday evening. Watchman Day, who was accidentally cut over the eye by the point of a bowie-knife thrown back by G. in the act of striking McGee, testified that Goodrich had been struck over the head, and otherwise maltreated by McGee and others, prior to the arrival of the watch. Goodrich was carried to the cage bleeding freely. The case was continued.—Defendant was then arraigned for feloniously and maliciously assaulting and wounding Louis Zimmer, corner of Main and 13th sts., about 4 o'clock Wednesday. Zimmer was very grievously wounded on the occasion, and is unable to leave his bed. The warrant was issued by the Mayor, who visited his lodgings, and took his deposition. He was kicked in the face and side by Goodrich some half dozen or more times when he attempted to rise after the assault on him by the latter. This case was also continued, and defendant was required to furnish $500 security to appear and answer it.

Dismissed.—James McGee and Celia Smith were summoned before the Mayor yesterday for assaulting R. F. Durand, and the latter for assaulting Celia Smith. Mr. Durand had, it appeared, become enamored of the charms of Miss Smith, and demonstrated his affection by buying a lot of furniture and installing her as proprietress of a house on Virginia street. The "green-eyed monster" put in an appearance shortly after the above domestic arrangement was concluded. Prior, however, to an open estrangement, Durand gave Smith a writing in Spanish, authorizing her to assume the ownership of certain articles in the house. She thereupon repudiated all connection with him, and installed her own peculiar cronies in the domicil. Acting under legal advice to the effect that Durand had a right to take possession of his own property in his own house, the latter forcibly entered the domicil and removed some of the future. Smith finding out what had been done, procured the presence of McGee and other friends to resist another invasion, and punish the aggressor, if necessary. The assaults on both sides were rather technical than real, no physical demonstrations of a very violent nature having occurred on the second visit. It was evident that the warrants were gotten out by each, that neither should have the advantage of being alone defendant. Durand claimed that having a large number of clerks engaged in selling cigars for him at the different hotels, he had hired the house for their accommodation, with the privilege to Smith of also staying there. This she denied, stating that D. had set her up in the house. His Honor remarked that it was not very difficult for him to see what description of house was intended to be kept by Smith, and that it was a matter of surprise that it should be so, remembering, as he did, that he had but lately abated Clara Coleman as a nuisance in the same house. It was equally evident, he said, that the matter before him had arisen out of a squabble about the possession of the furniture in the house, and as his Court was not the place so settle the ownership, he should dismiss the warrants obtained against each other by the parties, leaving it optional with them to try the rights of property involved before another tribunal.

Released Prisoner.—Corporal Beniah Pratt, of the Twenty-eighth regiment Pennsylvania volunteers, who was taken prisoner by our forces in October last, and who, after being detained here for some time, was sent to Tuscaloosa, Alabama, arrived in Richmond again yesterday en route for his home, which is in Luzerne county, Pennsylvania, having been released on parole. He will be sent from here by the first flag of truce that goes to Newport News. Corporal Pratt, since falling into our hands, has conducted himself with great propriety. His release is no doubt as much owing to feelings of humanity as any other cause, he having a family of girl children illy provided for at home. The prisoner came from Tuscaloosa to Richmond by himself, and duly surrendered himself on yesterday at his old quarters, on Main street.

High Price for Real Estate.—We understand that Messrs. J. M. Taylor & Son, real estate auctioneers, sold, on Wednesday last, several lots of vacant real estate on Franklin street, between 7th and 8th streets, at the high price of $143 per front foot. They were on the north side of the street, and of the kind called "shallow," running back only 110 feet. They were also "inside" lots. The above sale will give the reader some idea of the estimate now placed on the description of property alluded to. No doubt the rise is owing to the fact that the stagnation in business has caused an immense accumulation of money in Richmond, which, according to the rules governing trade, must seek an outlet somewhere. There is a great deal of real estate now in market, but "figures," whether at private sale or public vendue, are always "good," such is the demand.

The Musical Prodigy.—Blind Tom is unquestionably one of those wonders who appear at long intervals to perplex mankind. He has been often and well described. His music is well nigh an inspiration. It is a gift of mercy to him, seemingly, to compensate him for the privation of every other faculty. But although it sprang at once into being, we learn that there has been development—as in the instance of the mathematical Colburn—by practice. It is curious to observe with what perfect rapture he goes into a luxury that is all his own. Every nerve is on the stretch—the whole of that ungainly form is now full of action, and the deep silence around bespeaks the uncommon sympathy of that crowd of listeners.

Tom's memory is not confined to music.—For instance, he sang and played "Maryland," the music correctly, and the words with little prompting, when, as we have reason to believe, he had not heard either until that day, and the music but once. This is a memory of sound; and we learn that he can repeat a passage from Plato, when once heard, as well as a speech of Mr. Douglas.

If we were to criticise Tom's style at all, just as we would that of any other performer, we might suggest that there seemed to us some deficiency in point of expression. But we might hesitate even as to this, for who can tell that the expression, as we call it, which our harder organism demands, may not, to him, be still more fully imparted by the language of the music itself.

We wish Mr. Oliver, the fortunate master of this curious boy, success—especially as we learn that, from time to time, he has devoted the avails of his concerts to the beneficent cause of invalid soldiers.

The Senate Hall.—The new apartment for the accommodation of the Confederate States Senate, in the northwestern corner of the Capitol, is nearly ready for the reception of that dignified body. It is a pleasant room, well lighted and comfortably furnished. The decorations, which are of no great consequence in these times, are probably as suitable as could be procured, though by no means remarkable for their beauty.

On Deposit in the Wrong Bank.—A man who was too much intoxicated to give his name, was removed yesterday by the police from the door of the Traders' Bank, (on which he had deposited himself against the wishes of the Receiving Teller,) and stowed away in one of the vaults at the 1st Station-House.

Personal.—Among the arrivals in Richmond yesterday, were Major General Thomas H. Holmes, of the Fredericksburg Division of the Potomac army, and Col. R. C. Wainhall, 15th Mississippi, Gen. Crittenden's Division. They are stopping at the Spotswood Hotel.

Vessel Wrecked on the James River.—The tug-boat Perry, Capt. Willard, of Colonel L. Cabell's mail line, plying between Lynchburg and Richmond, struck a rock in the Joshua Fall's Pond, about twelve miles below Lynchburg, on Wednesday last, when upward bound, and in a short time sank. The engine (a male) was not attached to the ill-fated vessel at the time, and was saved. There were a large number of passengers aboard, most of whom were in their berths; but they all managed to escape a ducking.

Detention of the Cars.—Two of the cars of the upward bound freight train of the Virginia Central road ran off by the opening of the track yesterday, when the train was one mile this side of Hanover C. H., causing a detention of two hours to the upward morning mail train. The evening train, due at half past four o'clock yesterday, arrived at a quarter past six o'clock, having been detained at Gordonsville, waiting for the cars of the Orange and Alexandria railroad.

High Water.—The river has succeeded, through the liberality of the pluvial agent, in getting up to the magnitude of a respectable freshet. Even Shockoe Creek, usually so sluggish, spread itself yesterday in a reckless fashion, and astonished every beholder by its frantic impetuosity.

Breaking a Man's Leg.—Michael Leary was carried before the Mayor yesterday on the charge of feloniously wounding John Stevenson and breaking his leg. The wounded man being unable to appear, Leary was sent to jail until the 15th instant.

No Friends.—Two men, named Samuel Dewolff and John Taylor, were sent to jail by the Mayor yesterday on failing to give security to keep the peace, an article they had damaged on the previous day by their eccentric conduct.

Charged with Stealing Money.—A man named Edward Badger was put in the cage yesterday, charged with stealing seventy-six dollars in bank notes, the property of Wm. H. Davis.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA.

SENATE.

THURSDAY, Feb. 6, 1862.

The Senate was called to order at the usual hour by Mr. COGHILL, of Amherst. Prayer by the Rev. Dr. MOORE, of the First Presbyterian Church.

A communication was received from the House of Delegates announcing the concurrence of that body in the Senate's amendment to the joint resolution in relation to impressments, and the passage of Senate bill exempting from taxation the seal of courts attached to papers or records for the recovery of wages or other dues of deceased soldiers, and to refund the tax heretofore paid.

Mr. THOMPSON asked the chairman of the Committee on Retrenchment, &c., what progress had been made in the matter under investigation?

Mr. ROBERTSON said that various causes had conspired to prevent such progress as was desirable, but he would say that a report would be made at as early a day as practicable.

On motion of Mr. DAY, it was

Resolved, That the joint committee to inquire into the reduction of public expenditures be instructed to inquire into the expediency of so amending an ordinance of the convention passed on the 20th day of June, 1861, whereby compensation is allowed to three aids, to be designated by the governor, as to abolish the compensation thereby authorized, or reduce the number who shall in future receive pay.

THE TREASURER'S OFFICE.

Mr. PENNYBACKER presented the report of the joint committee to examine the Treasurer's office. The report speaks favorably of the management of the office, and recommends a moderate increase of the salaries of the Treasurer and the clerical force under his control, in view of the increase of business.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

The joint resolution in relation to the completion of the Covington and Ohio Railroad came up as the unfinished business of yesterday; when, on motion, the resolution was laid upon the table.

BILLS PASSED.

The following bills were taken up and passed:

Senate bill to refund license taxes to certain persons in the military service. [Authorizes said taxes to be refunded to volunteers, and persons driven from their homes by the enemy; but does not apply to persons whose business has been carried on by others during their absence.]

Senate bill authorizing a re-assessment of a house and lot in Lynchburg, owned by Barney McKenny and James Casey, and refunding a tax improperly paid.

Senate bill to empower the Governor to have made out and filed in the State Department complete lists of the Virginia forces.

Senate bill providing for the collection of taxes and other public dues in the hands of defaulting disloyal officers, and in the hands of other persons disloyal to the State.

THE WAR TAX.

The President laid before the Senate a communication from the Auditor of Public Accounts, in reply to a resolution adopted on the 3d inst., calling for estimates of the sum required by the State for the assumption and payment of the Confederate States war tax, as proposed by House bill for that purpose—Laid on the table and ordered to be printed. [The Auditor estimates Virginia's portion of the war tax at something over $3,000,000.]

A., L. & R. RAILROAD.

On motion of Mr. BALL, it was

Resolved, That the Committee on Roads inquire into the expediency of providing for the speedy completion of the Alexandria, Loudoun and Hampshire Railroad, or such part of it as is demanded by the military necessities of the country.

SMALL NOTES.

The bill exempting Savings Banks and other corporations from the penalties of issuing small notes, was taken up, debated, and laid on the table.

On motion of Mr. CARRAWAY, the Senate adjourned.

HOUSE OF DELEGATES.

THURSDAY, Feb. 6th, 1862.

The House met at 11 o'clock. Prayer by Rev. Dr. BURROWS.

Mr. COLLIER, from the Committee on Finance, reported a bill prescribing penalties against illegal assessments and collection of taxes.

Also, an adverse report to the petition of James W. Ryan, Sheriff of Clarke county, asking to be released from the payment of damages.

On motion of Mr. HUNTER, the unfinished business of yesterday, which was the consideration of Mr. STEGER's amendments to the substitute presented by Mr. HUNTER to the bill providing for a railroad connection between the Manassas Gap Railroad, at or near Strasburg, and the Winchester and Potomac Railroad, at or near Winchester, was taken up.

Mr. STEGER concluded his argument in favor of his proposed amendment, and was followed by Mr. HUNTER in opposition.

After a lengthy debate, Mr. ANDERSON, of Rockbridge, moved the previous question; which was carried.

Mr. ROBINSON, of Berkeley, offered a resolution that the appropriation be stricken out, and that the bill and substitute be referred to the Committee on Roads and Internal Navigation, with instructions to report a new bill, and consider the propriety of extending the road to Martinsburg, in Berkeley county; which resolution was rejected.

On motion of Mr. HUNTER, the whole matter was laid on the table.

Mr. BARBOUR, from the Finance Committee, reported a bill "imposing taxes for the support of the Government;" which was ordered to a second reading.

The House passed a bill to amend section 14 of chapter 15 of the Code, so as to authorize the enrollment of the acts and joint resolutions of the General Assembly on parchment or paper.

The House then went into secret session on the military bill.

The following bill was passed yesterday, during the secret session:

An act exempting from taxation the seal of Courts attached to papers or records for the recovery of the wages or other dues of deceased soldiers, and to refund the tax heretofore paid.

The following resolution was also passed yesterday:

By Mr. BLUE—That the appropriate committee inquire into the expediency of compensating Norman O. Smootend Jas. Gandy, Commissioners of Hampshire county, for assessing and listing the property of said county, they having failed to have their books examined and certified by the Clerk in consequence of the county being in the hands of the enemy.

Four Federal steamers and three sailing vessels are now on the look-out for the privateer Sumter, and another steamer is about to be dispatched on the same errand. The Government is much in want of seamen.

The Washington *Star* states that a schooner from Baltimore, the Dorothea Holmes, Capt. Wm. J. Lingerell, a few days ago ran up Aquia Creek under the rebel batteries. She had been allowed to pass the Federal guard boats on the supposition that she was bound to Washington. She had a cargo of salt.

Hon. Samuel A. Elliot, an ex-mayor of Boston, died on Wednesday.

Northern and Southern Affairs.

From our exchanges we make up the following summary of the latest news:

ANOTHER ALARM IN GREENBRIER.

The Staunton *Spectator* says:

During the past week a company of 250 of the enemy's cavalry were found to be advancing towards Lewisburg. They expected (so they said) to form a junction at Meadow Bluff with 1,000 infantry, who would reach that place by way of the Wilderness road from Nicholas C. H. As we had but a small force at Lewisburg, not sufficient to meet such a force of the enemy as seemed to be advancing upon that place, there was a great deal of alarm there, and many were preparing to leave. Colonel Alex. W. Reynolds, with the Twenty-second regiment, about 500 strong, and the Greenbrier cavalry, and several hundred citizens who took up arms for that special occasion, marched from Lewisburg to give them battle. As the rise in the waters prevented the infantry of the enemy from getting over to Meadow Bluff, the Yankee cavalry considered "discretion the better part of valor," and retired before Col. Reynolds had an opportunity of paying his respects to them.—They were pursued for some distance by the Greenbrier cavalry, under command of Capt. B. F. Eakle.

THE NORTH CAROLINA ARSENAL.

Captain John G. Booth, Superintendent of the North Carolina Arsenal and Foundry, situated at Fayetteville, writes to the Baton Rouge *Gazette* as follows:

My foundry will cover about three or four acres. My laboratory is shaping itself into a *chef d'œuvre*, and I have the best chief in the world. I am getting out timber for one hundred field batteries and five hundred heavy gun carriages; the latter, however, will be made principally of iron. My rifle factory has just begun to work, and we ship to-morrow one hundred to Richmond. Then I am building a railroad connecting me with the road to the iron and coal mines, which also gives me communication with the river and steamboats. You will get a better idea of the magnitude of my establishment from the statement of the fact that the Government has contracted for ten thousand tons of pig iron to be delivered here, with the privilege of increasing the amount to twenty thousand tons.

FROM ROANOKE ISLAND—NO BURNSIDE—GOV. WISE.

The Norfolk *Day Book*, of yesterday, contains the following:

The steamer Arrow, Capt. Slocum, arrived here last night via Albemarle and Chesapeake Canal, in fourteen hours, having left Roanoke Island on Wednesday morning at 9 o'clock.

By a gentleman who came passenger, we learn all was quiet at the Island when he left. Commodore Lynch's fleet of gun-boats are still lying there, waiting for the arrival of the Yankees. None of his gun-boats have ventured in Pamlico Sound since the Sea Bird went down, two weeks ago. Nothing is known at the Island of the movements of the Burnside expedition.

We regret to hear of the illness of General Wise at Nag's Head. He is still confined to his bed, and unable to attend to his laborious duties. he has designed many improvements which will greatly strengthen the defences at Roanoke Island. It would have been well for the country if he had been assigned to that command several months ago. We hope it is not yet too late, and that his health may soon recover.

THE CHARLOTTE (N. C.) MINT.

The Wilmington (N. C.) *Journal* believes the Confederate Government ought to restart the mint at Charlotte, in that State, and says $400,000 of gold coin could be introduced into circulation each year. This could be done for about 2 per cent.

THE YANKEES ON SHIP ISLAND.

The Mobile *Register* has received reliable intelligence that the Yankee troops are encamped on Ship Island to the number of from ten to fifteen thousand men. There were lying near the Island at the same time about 27 vessels, the most of them transports.

A PATRIOTIC FAMILY.

William A. Spencer, a resident of Amherst county, and who is only forty years of age, has seven sons now in the Confederate service, and two others who will enter the army during the present month, while he himself is making preparations and will in a few weeks go with his boys.—*Lynchburg Republican.*

COL. JAMES L. ORR.

Col. Orr, of South Carolina, took formal leave of his regiment, at Sullivan's Island, on the 10th instant, prior to leaving the State for the Confederate capital.

The following items of Northern news are taken from the Philadelphia *Inquirer*, of February 3d:

FROM ACCOMAC, VA.—A FLEET CAPTURED.

Major Andrews, who has charge of Pungoteague, has captured twenty-nine sloops and several schooners, and has them all anchored man-of-war style in Pungoteague creek. These vessels have all been taken because they had either attempted to run the blockade, had irregular papers, or had disobeyed the orders promulgated for the regulation of vessels in the waters of the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

SECESSION LADIES.

Three young ladies astonished the troops at Pungoteague the other day, by driving through the town and past the whole garrison, "full tilt," in a curricle, holding high over head a gay Secession flag, which, as the chariot flew, fluttered in the breeze. It took all hands so by surprise that the ghals were gone before they could arrest them. Subsequently, however, it was ascertained that they belonged to the F. F. V.'s thereabout, and were made to apologize in public before the whole command, for the insult.

RELIEF FOR MASSACHUSETTS SOLDIERS IN MARYLAND.

Additional information, says the Boston *Traveller*, received by Gov. Andrew in relation to the Massachusetts men, induced on false pretenses to go to Maryland, shows that there are at least fifty in a destitute condition, unable to obtain employment, and without means to return home. Gov. Andrew has telegraphed to the Maryland authorities that he will be personally responsible to the amount of $200, to be expended for their relief.

ANOTHER STATEMENT—M'CLELLAN AND THE MERRIMAC.

An old gentleman named Taylor, from Cincinnati, and who lately went North, (having been released from the prisons in Richmond,) "makes a statement," which is extensively published in Yankeedom. He says that the rebels are almost at the last gasp, especially in view of the now apparently well ascertained fact that their troops are—the greater portion of them—*determined to go home*, their enlistments expiring, most of them, by the twentieth of this month.

Mr. Taylor says that whatever may be the estimate of the policy of General McClellan in the loyal States, he is regarded by the rebels as pursuing a policy most destructive to all their hopes and expectations. His masterly inactivity for so long a time, which he has used to strengthen, organize and equip his armies, they regard as a stroke of policy that indicates fearful results to themselves. They admit that time has weakened them, while it has strengthened him, and they look with fearful forebodings to the fact that the term of enlistment of fully one-half the troops they have in the field expires before the 22d of February. They regard his resistance of the demand for a "forward movement," and the silent energy he has evinced, as marks of generalship of the highest order, and of a determination to work out his plan of operation despite the complaints of those who do not comprehend his purposes.

With regard to the steamer Merrimac, with her encasement of railroad iron, Mr. Taylor is of opinion that the report of the contraband as to her efficiency is not reliable. As he came out of Norfolk he saw a vessel in the stream, near the Navy-Yard, which he presumed was the Merrimac, but he says that she is regarded in Richmond as a failure. Her load of iron is said to be too heavy, and that she would not answer her helm during a recent trial trip. As she is intended to be used principally as a "ram," this is regarded as a fatal defect. Her draught of water is also so great that she cannot pass the obstructions that have been placed in the Elizabeth river to prevent the ingress of Federal vessels.

The Rules of the Sequestration Commissioners.

Editors Dispatch: In your paper of the 16th