Richmond Dispatch.

BY J. A. COWARDIN & CO.

THE DISPATCH is published daily, (Sundays excepted.) Price for mailing, $30 per year, or $16 for six months; 3 mos., $7.50; 1 month, $2.50—in advance. ☞ All remittances by mail, are at the risk of those who make them. Checks and drafts must be made payable to order.

FRIDAY MORNING.....MAY 13 1864

DAILY DISPATCH.

VOL. XXVI. RICHMOND, VA., FRIDAY MORNING, MAY 13, 1864. NO. 114.

THE MOVEMENTS ON RICHMOND—THE FIGHTING AROUND RICHMOND.

Speculation was rife in Richmond yesterday as to the strength of the force now in the vicinity of the city and their designs. The prisoners who were brought in give very different accounts of the force, though all agree that there are "three divisions." What three divisions in the Yankee army number we are unable to say; but of this we may be certain, that if the force had been a very strong one it would never have allowed Stuart's cavalry to dog it all the way from Ashland, attacking it whenever it chose and gaining advantages, without having turned upon it and given battle. The design of the enemy, as at first planned, was doubtless to come to Richmond and make a demonstration upon it, which was to be answered by co-operation from the force on the south side of the river. The appearance of a very large army of Confederates on the Southside has interfered with Butler's plans, and prevented the co-operation which was expected, and the heavy force of troops in the city was also a surprise to them. This cavalry raid has now been away from its base of operations for six days, and by this time the forage for their horses and provisions for their men must be nearly exhausted. Their departure from our front, when it does take place, must be made by way of the Meadow Bridge road, the bridges over which have been burnt by our forces.

THE FIGHTING WEDNESDAY EVENING.

During the fight on Wednesday afternoon three pieces of Stuart's Horse Artillery, under Major Breathed, were captured by the enemy at Half Sink, a point near Yellow Tavern.

Col. Randolph, of the 4th Va. regiment, (cavalry,) was killed in this fight.

MOVEMENTS DURING YESTERDAY.

Yesterday morning, about sunrise, the enemy, finding that the Meadow bridges, over the Chickahominy, were burnt, attempted to go down the Mechanicsville road. On this road they were met by a body of infantry (the name of which command need not be stated) and repulsed, after a brisk fight. They then fell back into a dense body of woods, on Mr. H. P. Taylor's farm, near Strawberry Hill. To the edge of this woods, which is distant from the city fortifications about a half mile, across a field, they advanced their artillery and some infantry skirmishers, and commenced a brisk fire.—Our infantry skirmishers advanced and drove them from the edge of the wood. During most of the day the fighting here was kept up without much effect on either side, very few of our men being killed or wounded.

Yesterday morning, about 9 o'clock, the 2d Virginia regiment, with three companies of the City Battalion, were ordered to attack the enemy on the right of the turnpike, near Brook Church. They went into the fight, and with great gallantry attempted to dislodge the enemy from some breastworks of logs and rocks that he had thrown up, but found them too strongly posted. They then fell back across a field to a wood on this side within range of the enemy, and here a spirited firing was kept up until 12 o'clock, when the 19th Virginia, Col. Gant, was sent up to relieve the battalion companies. They, however, declined being relieved, and remained until their ammunition was exhausted. At 4 o'clock the whole force was ordered back, and the firing ceased.

The following is a list of the killed and wounded in the battalion companies:

Company B.—Killed: J S Layne. Wounded: Jas Ashford, (in hands of the enemy;) Corp'l John Taylor, side; privates Geo W Mayo, thigh and shoulder; D W McCraw, thigh; C W Norris, breast; W R Patterson, knee; Jas Tilman, neck; David Thomas, knee; R L Wilkinson, hand.

Co C.—Killed: Serg't J H Thackston, private B C Morris. Wounded: Lieut Jno Randolph, thigh and hand; Sergt's Lewis S Ayres, breast, (in hands of the enemy;) R H Spencer, leg and hand; privates E F Coleman, wrist; T B Harris, breast; Wm Henshall, head; Rob't Alice, shoulder and neck; R C Richardson, leg; W M McParr, shoulder. Missing: Corp'l A H Brown, private T M Rafter.

Co D.—Wounded: Lt R Motley, private Jas S Baker. Missing: W G Andrews.

THE COMMANDER AND NUMBER OF THE ENEMY'S FORCES AROUND RICHMOND.

The commander of the force which is now operating around the fortifications of Richmond is Gen. Sheridan, who was formerly commander of the cavalry with the Federal army at Chattanooga, and was taken from there with Grant when he came to Virginia. In his experience as a cavalry commander we know of nothing very dashing or successful, nor is his reputation that of a great General. The force under him is represented by prisoners at the round figure of 20,000, all mounted infantry. That its strength is exaggerated is quite certain; that it consists of mounted infantry is equally certain, as in the fight at Brook Church yesterday the enemy's bayonets were plainly seen.

In the fight yesterday the enemy used two pieces of artillery, and seemed to have plenty of ammunition.

THE LATEST FROM SHERIDAN.

The latest report from the enemy around the fortifications was brought in last night by a courier, who reported that at seven o'clock they were in force on the Mechanicsville road, cooking their suppers. Some movement was expected to be made by them this morning.

OUR WOUNDED.

The following is a list of the officers wounded in the fight near the city yesterday who up to nine o'clock last night were received at the officers' hospital: Lieut. W. T. White, G, 33d N. C.; Lieut. J. W. Tate, F, do do; Capt. W. J. Collins, G, do. do.; Lieut. L. Redrick, G, Cobb's cav.; Lieut. R. F. Halstead, I, 38th Va.; Capt. W. G. Mims, G, 3d Ala.; Lieut M. L. Barber, D, 43d Ala.; Lieut. R. G. Redwood, K, do. do.; Lieut. P. Grauech, C, 5th N. C. cav.; Lieut. T. W. Easterling, G, 5th S. C. cav.

Brig. Gen. Gordons, of N. C., is at the same hospital, suffering with a musket-ball wound in the left arm, which it is said will have to be amputated. He was riding his bridle-rein when struck. The ball entered the forearm, breaking the bone, and passing through the muscle of the same arm above the shoulder.

Most of the other officers enumerated above are slightly wounded.

The following is a partial list of the wounded in yesterday's fights about the city received at the Seabrooks Hospital up to 6 o'clock P M: R Hudgins, G, 53d Va; J Jennings, F, 38th Va; C Everett, I, do; P Wand, G, 43d Va bat; J B Slaughter, D, do; B H Pollard, I, 38d do; J L Tonk, C, do; J C Destin, C, do do; C Childress, C, 9th do; W T Owens, G, 38th do; R R Sadler, K, 14th do; J Grommange, I, 38th do; W G Anderson, D, 25th Va bat; R M Robertson, F, 32d Va; T Wooten, F, do do; T S Hubert, I, do do; J W Clark, C, do do; W Watts, A, do do; J S Baker, D, 25th Va bat; J F Hall, F, 32d Va; W Wickson, F, do do; S Brooks, Thornton's art'y; R B Shelburne, 33d Va; J C Sadler, C, 19th do; J H Higginbotham, I, do do; G Hann, C, 14th do; F S Armorn, C, 33d N C; G Campbell, I, 54th do; J W Dry, F, 1st N C cav; D Johnson, K, do do; J Ray, A, do do; W A Mathews, A, 5th do; V E May, G, do do; Lt C Patru, C, 5th do; W J Watts, G, 1st Tex; E Newsome, G, do do; A Lawson, C, 5th do; Lt S J Woodward, B, 1st do.

DEATH OF GEN. J. E. B. STUART.

During the fight at Half Sink on Wednesday afternoon, Gen. Stuart was shot through the body, the ball entering one side of the abdomen and coming out through the back. He was brought to this city and carried to the residence of Dr. Burwell, where, we learn, he died last night.

THE ENEMY ON THE SOUTHSIDE—ANOTHER SKIRMISH NEAR CHESTER.

From the southside we learn that a small force of the enemy's cavalry and artillery made their appearance again on the turnpike between here and Petersburg.

About 11½ o'clock they attacked a force of our cavalry near Chester, and a skirmish ensued, in which they were driven off, and went back to the river. Our loss was three killed and six wounded.

They pulled down the telegraph wire and tore up the railroad track near the Junction for nearly a mile.

At Drewry's Bluff yesterday morning there was some skirmishing between our pickets and the enemy, with no result of importance.

THE HEAVY FIRING AT DREWRY'S BLUFF.

The firing heard in the city yesterday from siege guns was from some heavy pieces at Drewry's Bluff, shelling the woods. It is stated that in addition to this, the enemy's gunboats on the river were also shelling the woods along the banks.

EXPECTED RAID ON THE DANVILLE RAILROAD.

Yesterday afternoon Mr. Gill, the Superintendent of the Richmond and Petersburg Railroad, having gone towards Chester to ascertain the damage done to the road, discovered a large body of Yankee cavalry crossing the road and moving towards the Clover Hill Pits. The force was afterwards ascertained to be about 3,000, and it is believed that they have gone up to cut the Richmond and Danville Railroad, and perhaps to keep on to the canal.

THE SPEARS RAID UPON PETERSBURG—IT MARCHES TO CITY POINT.

We have some further particulars of Spears's raid on the rear of Petersburg. On Monday, after burning Maj. Belsches's mill and dwelling, and every out-house on his plantation, they proceeded to the premises of Mr. Niblett, not far distant, when they burnt that gentleman's mill, but did not molest his dwelling or out-houses. Late in the day they swung around towards James river, and burnt Baxter's and Temple's mills in Prince George county. On Thursday night they camped at Mt. Sinai Church, in Prince George county, where they cooked up their stolen sheep, hogs, cattle and poultry. A gentleman who saw their camp fires, says they extended for a distance of a mile or more, and presented quite a novel sight to the people in that section.

Tuesday morning, at seven o'clock, the column was moving by the old Baxter road to City Point, leaving Disputanta about a mile and a half to the right. Col. R. M. Harrison, of Prince George county, who saw them, states that their column was about three miles in length, numbering possibly between 1,500 and 2,000 men, and comprising an immense train of stolen buggies, carts, wagons, and pleasure carriages. But few negroes were observed. They had in one of their wagons a dead officer who had died of wounds received in the fight at Nottoway river or Jarratt's. He was evidently an officer of note, or his body would have been buried where he died. In this connection it may be interesting to state, that our troops heard at Jarratt's that Col. Spears himself was mortally wounded.

The enemy burnt the entire village at Jarratt's, except a small dilapidated building, occupied by an aged widow lady. In this case, the claims of humanity were for once regarded, even by Yankee hearts, and the building spared. Mr. Wm. Jarratt, we regret to hear, lost not only his elegant residence, but all his furniture, and much else of great value. Railroad and Government property of every description was of course consigned to the flames. This band of marauders, unlike many of their predecessors, arrested every man they caught who had any connection whatever with the State or Confederate Government. All clerks of Courts, magistrates, salt distributors, tax collectors, assessors of the revenue, constables and sheriffs, were secured.

THE FALLING BACK OF THE ENEMY ON THE SOUTHSIDE.

The retiring of the enemy from their advanced position towards Bermuda Hundreds was first known in Petersburg. A general engagement, it appears, was expected at that city on Tuesday. On every hand he seemed to be pressing his forces, and extending his lines—his extreme right reaching around to Brander's Bridge, north of the city. Contrary to this universal expectation, however, a general engagement did not come off, but there was little or no picket firing or skirmishing. At an early hour it was ascertained that the enemy had withdrawn his advanced lines, and retired several miles.

At a late hour Tuesday evening our scouts reported the enemy rapidly retiring on the road to Bermuda Hundreds. On the east bank of the Appomattox, in Prince George county, where the enemy advanced his negro regiments from City Point Monday, he was not to be found Tuesday, although a movement was made to ascertain his whereabouts, which pushed its search nearly to City Point.

The enemy left many valuable articles on the ground abandoned Tuesday in front of Swift Creek, such as Belgian rifles, canteens, haversacks, muskets, saddles, harness, etc. A gentleman saw the body of one negro soldier, stiff and stark. He had received a bullet through the breast, and his carcass was left unburied by his friends. There was every evidence of a hasty retreat. The retreat was as sudden as precipitate, for they had thrown up breastworks Monday, and made other preparations for a regular siege.

A GALLANT NIGHT ATTACK.

About half-past 11 o'clock on Monday night, the citizens of Petersburg were startled by several heavy discharges of musketry in Chesterfield county, the sound proceeding from a point due north of Petersburg.—Anxiety was on tip-toe to ascertain the cause but it was not ascertained until nearly four o'clock, just before the dawn of day. At that hour a guard came in with a Yankee who had come into our lines, and gave the particulars. On the enemy's extreme right, which had been pushed around Monday afternoon, to Brander's Bridge, he placed a heavy picket guard, consisting of a New Hampshire regiment, amounting to 800 men, picked troops. They were somewhat isolated from the main body of the Yankee forces, a fact which our Generals were not slow to perceive. Two companies of the 51st N. C. Regiment, General Clingman's Brigade, were selected to make a night assault on these sons of New Hampshire, and see if they could not be induced to "change their base."

The assault was sharp, sudden, and decisive. With a rush the brave Carolinians got within close proximity of the foe, and poured into him a deadly volley. Before he could recover from his surprise, another galling fire greeted him, and yet another a moment or two after, which proved rather warm for frigid New Hampshire, and the blue coats started off in wild confusion, shaping their course towards Bermuda Hundreds. It was a beautiful star-light night, and the dark moving mass could be distinctly seen, so the Carolinians had but to aim at the mass, and they were bound to hit. The race progressed until we had driven the New Hampshire Yankees back and across the turnpike and on over the railroad, a distance of some two miles or more. It was ascertained Tuesday that we killed and wounded a large number of the enemy in this night assault.

CONFEDERATE STATES CONGRESS.

The *Senate* met yesterday at 12 o'clock M. Prayer by the Rev. Mr. Duncan, of the Methodist Church.

The journal having been read,

On motion of Mr. Johnson, of Ark, the Senate resolved into secret session.

Mr. Caperton, of Va., presented the petition of J. Basssett French, asking that certain cotton and stocks contributed for the erection of an equestrian statue of Gen. Thos. J. Jackson, be released from taxation and export duties. Referred.

Mr. Barnwell, of S. C., from the Finance Committee, reported back, without amendment, House bill continuing till the first of January next the increased pay of Government clerks.

Mr Johnson, of Ark., offered an amendment that no one should be entitled to the benefit of the act unless they made affidavit that they had no other means of support. Rejected, and the bill was passed.

The resolution relative to the day of adjournment was, on motion of Mr Burnett, of Ky., laid on the table.

The Senate again resolved into secret session, and soon after adjourned.

The *House* met at 12 o'clock, and was opened with prayer by Rev. Dr. Moore, of the Presbyterian Church.

A Senate bill, to provide transportation for members of Congress living beyond the Mississippi river, was referred to the Military Committee.

Mr. Lyon, of Ala., from the Finance Committee, reported a bill to provide the prompt return of money paid into the Treasury Department by the Navy Department. Passed.

Mr. Russell, of Va., from the Judiciary Committee, reported back a bill concerning the malicious arrest of commissioned officers of the army, and asked that the same be referred to the Military Committee.

Mr. Russell, from the same, reported a bill to provide for the speedy settlement of claims for property impressed in the Trans-Mississippi Department. Passed.

Mr Russell, from the same, reported back a bill to repeal the act authorizing the suspension of the writ of *habeas corpus*.

The committee unanimously recommended that the bill do not pass, and that the same be laid upon the table. Laid on the table—yeas 58, nays 2.

Mr. Orr, of Miss., laid before the House resolutions of the State of Mississippi, requesting their Representatives and Senators in Congress to have the *habeas corpus* bill repealed. Ordered to be printed.

He also offered a resolution that the Judiciary Committee be instructed to report a bill repealing the act of the last Congress suspending the writ of *habeas corpus*. Laid on the table.

The vote having been taken, the resolution of Mr. Orr was laid on the table.

Mr Lyon, of Ala, reported a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to pay out of the Treasury the amount of money deposited there by the ladies of South Carolina for building a gunboat. Passed.

Mr E M Bruce introduced a bill that so much of the above recited act as authorizes the issue of two dollars in new currency for every three dollars of old currency which has been or may be funded, is hereby repealed.

Mr. Foote, of Tenn., introduced a resolution to repeal the *habeas corpus* act, which was, on motion of Mr. Miles, postponed till Thursday next, and made the order of the day for the morning hour.

On motion of Mr. Goode, of Va., the House adjourned.

City Battalion.

To the Editors of the Dispatch:

Gents: Please oblige the undersigned by inserting the following:

Learning that it is a current rumor in the city that in the recent engagement with the U. S. gunboat Shasshees, in the lower James river, my company was much cut to pieces, and desiring to correct such rumor as well as to relieve the anxiety of the relatives and friends of the members of the company, I will state that, though the only infantry used upon the occasion, none were hurt.

NOTE.—No dismounted cavalry, acting as sharpshooters, were used as stated in your issue of today, (May 9th, 1863.) Very resp'y,

LUCIEN L. BASS,
Capt Co G, 25th Va Battalion.

Fort Clifton.

CAMP, May 12th, 1864.

To the Editors of the Dispatch:

Gentlemen: For the benefit of the families of the parties concerned, please state that none of the members of Martin's Richmond battery, who are from Richmond, were hurt in the recent gunboat engagement at Clifton. The members of the battery are all well and in fine spirits

Yours, &c, S TAYLOR MARTIN,
Capt Comd'g Art'y at Clifton.

Henley's Battalion.

To the Editors of the Dispatch:

Be kind enough to state in your paper that persons wishing to send provisions to Henley's battalion, can do so by leaving the same at the Post-Office Department before 10 o'clock to-morrow (Friday) morning, marked with name and company.—The men are suffering for something to eat, having been in the rifle pits since yesterday morning.

May 12th.

RED RIVER COTTON.—The other day a Yankee dispatch read that Banks had captured forty thousand bales of cotton on the Red river. The truth about the amount captured is contained in the following extract from a letter written in New Orleans to the New York *World*:

One of the most important civil officers of the Government residing here has recently received a letter from Alexandria, from a sufficiently high personage to be reliable, assuring him that all the cotton which may be expected from Red river has already been sent down, and as this is only one hundred and twenty bales the prospect is a poor one. As far as heard from, the torch has been put by the planters to every bale of cotton on the river above that point, which is chiefly attributed to the lawless conduct of the naval part of the expedition, which commenced the work by the indiscriminate destruction of all private property within its reach. The planters are finishing the work on their own account.

The thieving part of the expedition was as great a failure as anything else connected with it.

REV. DR. PLUMER.—By a recent letter from the United States we learn that Dr. Plumer is engaged in preaching for the press a new work on the Christian Life.

The Yankee Iron-Clad Navy—Admiral Dahlgren's Opinion of Monitors.

We have before us a copy of Rear Admiral Dahlgren's report to the Secretary of the Navy, of the services of the monitors before Charleston. The concluding portions of the report are of a general character as to the services and capabilities of the monitors, which we give in full. The accompanying report is from Commodore John Rodgers, who has had more experience with monitors in actual warfare than any other officer of the navy:

AFTER CONFLICTS.

The operations of the iron-clads against Morris Island were appropriately closed by a severe contest with Fort Moultrie, Batteries Bee, Beauregard, &c., to relieve the Weehawken, which had grounded under their fire, and was finally got off with some severe injuries, owing to the falling tide having exposed the hull under the overhang.

There were other occasions when severe conflicts occurred with the rebel works on Sullivan's Island. And besides the principal attacks in force there were few days from the first attack (July 10th) to its evacuation (September 7th) that some iron-clads or gunboats were not engaged in firing at the enemy's works, so as to facilitate the labor of our troops ashore, as will be perceived by the following sample from the record:

Date—1863	Object	Vess's Engaged.
July 18.....	Assault on Wagner....	Montauk, Flag, Kaatskill, Nantucket, Weehawken, Patapsco; gunboats Paul Jones, Ottawa, Seneca, Chippewa, Wissahickin
July 22.....	Wagner.....	Nantucket, Ottawa, (gunboat)
July 24.....	Wagner to cover advance	Weehawken, Flag, Ironsides, Kaatskill, Montauk, Patapsco, Nantucket.
July 25.....	Wagner.....	G'bts Paul Jones, Seneca, Ottawa, Dai Ching.
July 28.....	Wagner.....	Gunb'ts Ottawa, Dai Ching, Paul Jones
July 29.....	Wagner.....	Weehauken, Kaatskill, Ottawa, (gbt)
July 30.....	Wagner.....	Ironsides, Patapsco,
July 31.....	Rebel batteries on Morris Island.....	Ironsides, Kaatskill, Patapsco, Ottawa, (gunboat.)
August 1....	Wagner.....	Ottawa, (gbt)
August 2....	Wagner.....	Montauk, Kaatskill, Patapsco, Weehauken, Nahant, Passaic, Marblehead, (gunboat.)
August 4....	Wagner.....	Marblehead, Ottawa, (gunboats.)
August 6....	Wagner.....	Montauk, Marblehead, (gunboat.)
August 8....	Wagner.....	Marblehead, (gbt)
August 11...	Wagner and vicinity.....	Ottawa, Marblehead, Mahaska, (gbts.)
August 13...	Rebel batteries on Morris Island.....	Patapsco, Kaatskill
August 14..	Rebel batteries on Morris Island.....	Gunb'ts Dai Ching, Ottawa, Mahaska, Wissahickin, Racer
August 15...	Wagner.....	Gunboats Wissahickin, Mahaska, Ottawa, Dai Ching, Racer, Dan Smith.
August 17...	Rebel bat'rs on Morris Island to divert fire from our batteries, which opened on Sumter.....	Mortar boats Racer, Dan Smith.
August 18...	Wagner to prevent assault.	Weehauken, Ironsides, Montauk, Nahant, Passaic, Kaatskill, Patapsco; Gunboats Canandaigua, Mahaska, Ottawa, Cimerone, Wissahickin, Dai Ching, Ladona.
August 19...	Wagner.....	Ironsides, Passaic, Weehauken, gunboats Wissahickin, Mahaska, Dai Ching, Ladona, Ottawa.
August 20...	Rebel batteries on Morris Island.....	Ironsides.
August 21...	Sumter and Wagner...	Ironsides, gunboats Mahaska, Ottawa, Ladona, Dai Ching.
August 22...	Wagner.....	Ironsides, Patapsco, gunboats Mahaska, Dai ching
August 23...	Sumter.....	Weehauken, Ironsides, gbt Montauk
September 1.	Sumter.....	Weehauken, Passaic, Patapsco, Montauk, Nahant.
September 5.	Obstructions bet'n Sumter and Greg	Weehauken, Nahant, Patapsco, Montauk, Passaic, Lehigh.
September 6.	Wagner and Gregg.....	Lehigh, Nahant.
September 7.	Batt'rs on Sullivan's Isl'd.	Ironsides, Weehauken, Montauk, Passaic, Patapsco, Nahant, Lehigh
September 8.	Batt'rs on Sullivan's Isl'd.	Ironsides, Patapsco, Lehigh, Nahant, Montauk, and Weehauken, (ashore.)

I shall now briefly comment on the various qualities of the monitors:

1. Capacity for resistance.
2. Power of ordnance.
3. Draft of water.
4. Speed.
5. Number of crew.

1. *Endurance.*—During the operations against Morris Island, the nine iron-clads fired eight thousand projectiles, and received eight hundred and eighty-two hits. Including the service at Sumter in April, and the Ogechee, the total number was eleven hundred and ninety-four, distributed as follows:

SERVICE OF THE IRON-CLADS.

	Number of Shots Fired		Hits April 7th, 1863	Hits at Ogechee	Total Hits
	15 inch	11-inch			
Kaatskill.....	138	425	86	21	.. 16
Montauk.....	301	478	154	14	46 214
Lehigh.....	41	28	36	..	.. 36
Passaic.....	119	167	91	35	9 134
Nahant.....	170	276	69	36	.. 105
Patapsco.....	178	239	96	47	1 144
Weehauken....	264	643	134	53	.. 187
Nantucket.....	44	155	53	51	.. 164
Ironsides.....	..	4439	164	(?)	.. 164
	1255	6771	882	256	56 1194

	No. shots fired.		Weight projectiles fired in tons.	
By Ironsides.....	4439			288½
11-inch by Monitors	2332	3587	151½	365
15-inch by Monitors	1254		213½	
		8026		653½

Of the eight monitors, one was always absent at Warsaw (Nahant or Nantucket) to blockade the rebel ram.

The Lehigh did not arrive until August 30th, therefore was only able to participate in the operations of the remaining seven days, but did good work.

For some time only five monitors were available for general attack, and then six, which was the greatest number disposable at any one time. The consequence of the protracted firing and hard usage to which the monitors were exposed during these two months of incessant service, were unavoidably very considerable in the aggregate; and the greater also that all repair which could possibly be dispensed with was postponed to the conclusion

It was, therefore, necessarily extensive when entered upon. The battering received was without precedent. The Montauk had been struck two hundred and fourteen (214:) the Weehauken one hundred and eighty-seven (187) times, and almost entirely by 10-inch shot.

What vessels have ever been subjected to such a test?

It is not surprising that they should need considerable repair after sustaining such a severe pounding for so long a time, but only that they could be restored at all to a serviceable condition. The force of a 10-inch shot must be experienced to be appreciated. Any one in contact with the part of the turret struck falls senseless, and I have been nearly shaken off my feet in the pilot house when engaging Moultrie.

All the little defects of detail were marked by such a searching process (decks were cut through; cannon were rested out; side armor shaken; tops of pilot-houses crushed, &c. But all these were repairable, and no vital principle was sacrificed or touched. With such workhorses and means as a Northern Navy Yard includes, the repair of all casualties could have been speedily effected; but we had to do without, for they were here, from a great distance, during part of necessarily considerable delays; and moreover, it was not admissable to withdraw but a portion of the Monitors at a time from the blockade

The additions that were deemed advisable for strengthening the pilot-houses and turrets were also put on at this time, and the bottoms cleaned, for they had now become so foul with oysters and grass, that the speed was reduced to three or three and a half knots, and with the strong tide of this harbor, added considerably to the difficulties of working the vessels properly under fire.

One night I was caught by heavy weather from southeast, while close up to Sumter, when I had gone to attack it, and it was well that the darkness of the night prevented the slowness of our motion being perceived, while extricating the monitors from their position.

POWER OF ORDNANCE.

Each turret contains two guns, and from the peculiar facility which it has for giving direction to the heaviest ordnance, no doubt arises the desire to make these of the heaviest description. How far other considerations should control the character of the ordnance, is necessarily an unsettled question.

To strike an armored ship, it may be best to use a gun capable of the greatest power; but whether this shall be derived from a projectile of great weight, driven by low velocity, or of less weight and high velocity; whether it shall be a 15-inch gun, fired with thirty five or forty pounds, or a 13-inch, fired with fifty pounds of powder, is not here material; the weight of the gun for either purpose will not vary to any important degree. But in operations against earthworks, whose material cannot be damaged permanently, but only disturbed, and which are only to be dealt with by keeping down their fire, a much lighter projectile would be preferable, in order that the practice may be as rapid as possible. Hence a piece of 16,000 lbs for 10 inch or 11 inch shot and shell.

When a number of monitors are brought together, it would be better also to have guns of like kind in each turret, and bringing into action which-ever might be preferable

Each of the monitors of this squadron had a 15 inch and a smaller gun, 11 inch or 8 inch rifle, and hence the rapidity of fire which was most desirable was not attained. That this was due to the calibre of the gun, and not to its being located in a turret may be shown by one notable instance.

November 9, 1863, the Montauck, Capt Davis, was engaged in battering Sumter. In so doing, the 11-inch gun fired twenty five shells successively in one hour, of which twenty one hit the wall of the fort aimed at—distance sixteen hundred yards. This is at the rate of one shell in 24 minutes, which is not only rapid, but also exceedingly accurate practice.

There is no reason why another 11 inch, if placed in the adjoining carriage, instead of the 15 inch, could not have been fired in the same time, at which rate that monitor would have delivered an 11-inch shell every 1.2 minutes.

The rates of fire reported for the Ironsides by Capt Rowan are:

Hours—Minutes.	Time. Fired.	No. Fired.	Time for each fire. Minutes.
Most rapid..	0.05	25	1.74
Continuous .	2.55	490	2.86
Assumed ...	1.00	360	1.33
Montauk....	1.00	25	2.40

It will be perceived that for a short space of time the frigate delivered a shell from each gun in 1.74 minutes for three hours in 2.86 minutes; and it is believed that a fire could be sustained at the rate of 7.33 minutes. The last rate is, therefore, possible; but I am sure it would be difficult to sustain it long with much regard to good aim and considerable distances; and I believe, on the whole, that for every practical purpose there would be all desirable rapidity of fire from the 11-inch turret.

Thus it is to be presumed that there will be equality of advance power in the same number of 11-inch guns as to the rapidity of fire whether in a turret or broadside.

DRAFT OF WATER.

The monitors of the Passaic class draw about 11½ feet of water when properly trimmed. On this coast 10 and 11 feet is the most convenient draft of water for penetrating all the principal sounds and rivers, and navigating them to any extent. A greater draft restricts a vessel in movement, and in many instances excludes her from several ports, except under very favorable circumstances.

SPEED.

The speed of the monitors is not great, (seven knots,) but it is quite respectable with a clear bottom, and is fully equal to that of the Ironsides.—Their steerage is peculiar, but, when fully understood and rightfully managed, not difficult of control. They pivot with celerity, and in less space than almost any other class of vessels.

NUMBER OF MEN.

The number of men required to work them and the guns is only eighty, which is very moderate.—In common with all iron clads, the scope of vision is much restricted, for the plain reason that in such vessels apertures of any size must be avoided.—There are some other defects, but they are not inherent, and, it is believed, are susceptible of being remedied wholly or in part. So much for the monitors.

THE IRONSIDES.

The Ironsides is a fine powerful ship. Her armor has stood heavy battering very well, and her broadside of seven 11-inch guns, and one 8-inch rifle has always told with signal effect when opened on the enemy Draft of water about 15½ to 16 feet—Speed 6 to 7 knots, and crew about four hundred and forty men.

The defects of the vessel are the unplated ends, which are consequently easily damaged by a raking fire, and involve the rudder and screw more or less, while she can return no fire in either direction. This was particularly and frequently inconvenient in attacking the works on Morris Island, for at certain stages of the tide vessels tall nearly across the channel, and present bow and stern to the beach of Morris Island So that sometimes it was necessary to delay placing the vessels in position, and at others she would swing around very awkwardly when engaged.

The monitors, on the other hand, were almost equally well defended on all sides, and could fire in any direction. The Ironsides was also open to descending shot, and her scope of fire too much restricted by badly placed ports. The desire for comparison which rages just now can easily be satisfied by bringing the above data in juxtaposition. Just as they are, the Ironsides is capable of a more rapid and concentrated fire, which, under the circumstances, make her guns more effective than the 15 inch of the monitors.

On the other hand, she was restricted by draft to the mid-channel, was very vulnerable to the raking fire, and the direction of her own guns was very limited laterally. The monitors could operate in most of the channels, could direct their fire around the whole circle, and were almost equally well defended on all sides The defects in both classes of vessels are susceptible of being remedied partially or entirely. The defence of the Ironsides could be made complete, and that of the monitors equally so The armament of the monitors could be perfected so as to give all desirable rapidity of fire, but by no contrivance could the Ironsides be enabled to use much heavier guns than those mounted. Yet when such changes were made as experience suggested, there still would remain to the monitors the lighter draft, choice of guns from the heaviest to the lightest, defensibility, and direction of fire around the whole circle; consequently the ability to carry a heavier battery into the least depth of water, with equal power of offence and defence in any direction, and that with half the number of guns carried in broadside by another vessel.

COMPARISON OF IRON-CLADS.

The comparison now made is to be understood as having relation to existing circumstances, and not at all intended as conclusive in regard to the general merits of iron-clads.

It is in this sense that the action of the Navy Department is to be considered with reference to the selection of one class of vessels over another.

It is evident that it was not designed to adopt any one style exclusively, for of the three vessels first ordered, two were of the ordinary broadside class—the Ironsides and the Galena. The latter was quickly proved to be absolutely inefficient, and so must any armored steamer of that size. It is universally admitted that plates of less than four and a half (4½) inches cannot stand the shock of heavy projectiles, and vessels so armored must be of considerable tonnage. I presume the Department only intended to build such vessels as were best adapted to the service at the scene of war.

Keeping in view the peculiar exigencies of the case, which required light draft and great ordnance power, it appears that the selection of the Department could not have been more judicious in preferring a number of monitors to operate from a heavy frigate as a base; and if the intent of the Department could have been carried out in regard to numbers, we should now have been in entire possession of the coast from the Capes of Virginia to New Orleans, including Wilmington, Charleston, Mobile, &c.

Many defects of both classes are easily remediable, but some of those in the monitors could only be determined by the test of battle; before that, approximation only was possible.

What other style of vessel could the Department have chosen? Certainly none that has been built by English or French naval authorities. The Warrior and her class are exceedingly powerful, but could not get within gunshot here. On the other hand, there is very little navigable water on the coast which is not accessable to the monitors. They command supremely all that is near the shore, and cannot themselves be reached by vessels of heavier draft. So that when there was some reason to apprehend the appearance of certain rams in this quarter, I assured the Department that the iron-clads could maintain position so long as coal and provisions lasted.

It may appear that I speak too positively on the subject, but some experience with them certainly gives a right to do so.

With a single exception, I have been on board a monitor in all the principal actions, and the recollections of exposure to the Fleet Captain near me shows that I was in a situation to judge. I was once in the Ironsides in an attack on Moultrie and Sumter. I have also watched the behavior of the monitors at sea through all the phases of winter weather in this country.

The comparison with which your little monitors, supported by an iron-clad fleet, have closed this part to that month noting. Very respectfully

JOHN A. DAHLGREN,
Rear Admiral.

Hon. *Gideon Welles*, Secretary of the Navy.

entering the Roads, I advanced one monitor well up towards the inner debouches of the Northern Channel, supported by another. On the night of the 19th of July, an English steamer attempted to run in, and having eluded the hot pursuit of the outside blockade, no doubt indulged in the belief that all danger was past. But the gallant Captain Rodgers was in advance that night with the Keokuk, and a shot sent suddenly by him ahead of the culprit steamer signified no escape. In despair or alarm the latter grounded on a shoal, and her wreck has since served as a warning to like evil doers. Two or three steamers that were in, managed to get out immediately after, and one or two may have gotten in, for the crews of the monitors were often too fatigued than with a day's battle to keep watch at night; but there ended the business of each, and for several months not a vessel has passed in or out.

These four monitors, who thus keep watch and ward, muster eight (8) guns and three hundred and twenty (320) men, which is almost insignificant in contract with the work done.

I have thus put on paper the general impressions now uppermost, but very hastily and under great pressure of business, which will, I hope, excuse such imperfections as may have inadvertently occurred. With more leisure I could do full justice to this interesting subject.

I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN A. DAHLGREN, Rear Admiral,
Commanding S. A. B S.

Hon. *Gideon Welles*, Secretary of the Navy.

The Trans-Mississippi.

The Atlanta *Appeal*, of the 3d inst., has the following encouraging view of affairs in the trans-Mississippi Department, written before the report of Steele's surrender to Price:

If our intelligence from the West be true, and we have no reason to doubt it, Generals Smith and Price are doing their work up nobly on the west side of the Mississippi river. The campaign of Banks in Louisiana has proved a complete failure, and he is represented as having been driven on the north side of Red river, and is seeking refuge at Natchez, on this side of the Mississippi. This leaves all West Louisiana free from the enemy, and will play hob with those Yankees who have emigrated thither with the view of raising cotton and sugar. They will be compelled to give up their farms, of course, and re emigate to the North.

Gen Magruder seems to have no foe to contend with in Texas, and Gen Smith will remain idle during the spring and summer, as it will be impossible for Lincoln to supply Banks with a new force sufficiently strong to renew the campaign.

Gen Price, too, since he has been relieved of the incubus of Gen Holmes, is beginning to loom up, and will again signalize himself as the deliverer of Arkansas and Missouri. His victory over Steele seems to have been a complete one, and we doubt whether Steele will be permitted to remain long in Little Rock, even if he should get there.—Now that the work has commenced, and Gen Price has his face once more set towards the North, we may rest assured he will not remain idle. His army will gather strength as he moves through the country, and we predict that the summer months will find him once more within the borders of his own state, rallying the people to action.

These victories will inspire the hearts and nerve the arms of our people west of the river, who, we doubt not, will rally to the support of the army in such numbers as will insure that country from further invasion. Many of them, probably, will be enabled to cultivate the crops which the Yankees have planted and reap the proceeds before Lincoln will be able to send another effective force against them, even if he shall ever have the power of doing so, which we do not believe will be the case. He now has his hands too full on this side of the river to give much attention to the West, and Gen. Banks will call for reinforcements in vain. The greater probability is, that this individual will be called to Washington to give an account of his stewardship.

These victories and triumphs in the West will go far to teach the people of the North the utter folly of attempting further subjugation of the South.—They will teach them the impossibility of holding the country and turning it to advantage, even after they have once made a conquest of it. If there was any portion of our country which they considered to be firmly within their grasp, it was West Louisiana; yet this has been wrested from them, and we believe without the hope of recovery. So it will be with Arkansas, so with Missouri, so with Tennessee, and so with Kentucky. The return wave is now flowing back upon the North, and no earthly power can stay its progress. It will roll on and on, gathering strength and volume as it progresses, until the entire South is redeemed from the despotic tread of the Yankee invader.

Our dastard and unprincipled foe have had their most jovial revels on Southern soil. From this day forth they will be made to feel a more infuriating sting of Southern steel than they have hitherto felt. Our people, long oppressed, are now thoroughly aroused, and our soldiers may be said