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GENERAL NEWS.

The bill for the collection of direct taxes in the insurrectionary districts has become a law of the U. S. It provides for the sale of real estate in certain cases for this purpose. Where owners have abandoned their land to engage in the rebellion, and the same shall have been struck off to the U. S. at vendue, the Commissioners proposed to be appointed may lease the same under such regulations as will secure proper and reasonable employment at wages or upon shares of the crop of such persons and families as may be residing upon the land. The proceeds of the leases and sales are to be paid into the Treasury, one-fourth of which is to be paid over to the Gov. of the States wherever such lands are situated, or his authorized agent, when such insurrection shall be put down, and the people shall elect a legislature and State officers who shall take an oath to support the Constitution of the U. S. and such fact shall be proclaimed by the President for the purpose of reimbursing loyal citizens of any State or for such other purpose as said State may direct, and one-fourth shall also be paid over to the said State as a fund to aid in colonization or emigration from said State, of any free person of African descent who may remove therefrom to Hayti, Liberia, or any other tropical State or colony.

The Knoxville Register has information that two vessels arrived at a Confederate port on Saturday last, with four thousand stand of arms on one, and three thousand five hundred on the other, and one hundred barrels of powder; and on Sunday two other vessels entered the same port with arms and ammunition, the number and quantity of which was not ascertained.

Messrs. Walger, Michel and Robey, who were arrested during the past week at the navy-yard, in Washington, on the charge of disloyalty, and confined in the guard-house, have each had their examinations, which resulted in their discharge from custody.

In the U. S. Senate, yesterday, a resolution was submitted, and laid over, declaring all acts of State governments in furtherance of rebellion null, void and of no effect, and affirming that no State has been or could have been carried out of the Union by any such illegal legislation.

In the U. S. House of Representatives yesterday, the bill to allow bank notes under five dollars to circulate in the District of Columbia, and the bill providing for the selection of jurors in the several courts of said District were passed.

A dispatch from Gen. McClellan's headquarters states that the weather prevents all military operations. The water in the Chickahominy has not receded and the roads are almost impassable.

A letter from the federal army before Richmond in the N. Y. World says:—"The railroad bridge over the Chickahominy has been double planked over the tier, so as to admit the passage of infantry and cavalry. On Tuesday afternoon, shortly after the bridge was ready for passage, Col. Averell's Third Pennsylvania Cavalry appeared, and in single file, with men mounted, commenced crossing the elevated tressle work bridge, over one fourth of a mile in length. At the extreme west end, the road curves slightly, affording a good view to the rear. The sight of this long line of mounted men, in single file, extending as far back as the eye could reach, was one of the most novel and original we ever witnessed."

On Tuesday, in New York, a large sale of confiscated cotton, took place under the superintendence of the Chief of the United States Cotton Bureau-Agency. The catalogue embraced some fifteen hundred bales, among them six hundred of the "Sea Island" description, and three hundred purchased by the Government some time since, and used to protect the steamer Vanderbilt during the Merrimac furor. The attendance was very large and the bidding quite spirited. For the "Sea Island," the prices obtained ranged from 24 to 64½ for the best quality; the Gulf cotton sold at an average of 21 and 22. The aggregate amount realized by this sale is \$200,000. Another sale of 1000 bales of confiscated New Orleans cotton will be held to-morrow.

The bronze statue of Freedom, after the model of Crawford, which has been cast by Clark Mills, at his foundry near Washington, has been completed, and two portions of it brought to the East Capitol Grounds, where the other portion will be brought and set upon a temporary platform, until the dome on which it is designed to place it, is ready for its reception.

The board of directors of the Washington and Georgetown Railway Company have elected Henry D. Cooke, esq., President, and Harris C. Fahnestock, esq., Secretary and Treasurer; and already have workmen been engaged with the preparations at the foot of the capitol for commencing the roadway thence along Pennsylvania avenue to Georgetown. It is understood that a portion of the rails and other material for the construction of the road have been already procured.

The two young girls, Henrietta and Adelia Neil, who were arrested in Washington for making a demonstration of sympathy while the Confederate prisoners were passing along Pennsylvania avenue, were released between four and five o'clock in the afternoon.

At a meeting of the coal dealers of Boston, on Saturday afternoon, it was unanimously agreed to fix the price of coal at six dollars per ton, on account of the great freshet in Schuylkill county, and the consequent scarcity of coal in Philadelphia.

Gen. Burnside is holding a conference with Gen. McClellan.

A correspondent of the Times, writing from London, says:—"The most extraordinary machine in the exhibition is beyond question the one for microscopic writing. This enables a person to write in the usual way, and to duplicate his writing a million times smaller; so small, indeed, that it is invisible to the naked eye, yet with a powerful microscope becomes so plain that every line and dot can be seen.—The inventor claims that with this instrument he can copy the entire Bible twenty-two times in the space of an inch. Practically it will be of great service in preventing forgeries. With one of these machines a private mark can be put on bills so minute and perfect that the forger can neither perceive nor imitate it."

Mrs. Greenhow, recently released from the Old Capitol prison in Washington, has arrived in Richmond.

Port Republic, in the vicinity of which two battles have taken place, is on the right bank of the Shenandoah river, in Rockingham co., Virginia, eleven and a half miles southeast of Harrisonburg, seventy-five miles south of Winchester, and about one hundred miles northwest from Richmond.

A letter from on board the U. S. steamship Mississippi, off New Orleans, states that a load of cotton from the upper Louisiana had reached that city. This cotton was to be put on board the steamer Tennessee, and sent to Boston, which will make good the promise of General Butler that he would send home a freight of cotton within sixty days after passing the forts.

We have in a Cuban paper the official report of the Mexican General, Gen. Felipe B. Berriozabal, Commander-in-Chief of the Mexican Army at Puebla, as copied from a Puebla paper,—by which we have, confirmed, the report of the French repulse,—as heretofore stated.

A number of the leading British merchants in New York have it in contemplation to tender Lord Lyons a complimentary dinner prior to his departure for Europe, in the Persia, a week from to-morrow. At the British consulate the report is that the minister goes home to look after business of a purely private nature commencing his personal care, and not on a diplomatic mission in relation to this or any other country.

The New York World of yesterday says:—"The North Carolina imbroglio may be considered settled. Mr. Vincent Colyer, as will be seen by a report of his remarks at Cooper Institute last evening, is about to return to North Carolina to reopen the negro schools at Newbern. This he does under the express authority of the President, who informed him he would not be interfered with hereafter."

One of the terrible plagues of Egypt now threatens Colorado. The grasshoppers are making their appearance in innumerable numbers. Already they have commenced their devastating attacks on vegetation.