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## SOUTHERN NEWS.

The following proposition has been incorporated by the lower house of the Confederate Congress into the new conscription law, about being passed: "That no person shall be enrolled who has a substitute in the army, furnished in accordance with orders heretofore issued by the Secretary of War, unless the substitute had deserted or shall desert."

The New Orleans Delta of the 24th of January says, it is reported the levees above that city were in a very dangerous condition, holes having been cut into them by Confederate guerillas, and the river having risen to within a few feet of an overflow.

The port of Galveston has been declared open to the trade of all nations friendly to the South by a proclamation of Gen. Magruder's, which he sent forth under a neutral register to a neutral port.

The Mobile Advertiser of the 13th publishes a dispatch dated Tullahoma, Tenn., Jan. 12, which says: "Every officer in Breckinridge's staff was wounded, or had his horse shot under him."

It is reported that Gen. Van Dorn has recaptured Holly Springs, Miss., with 700 prisoners and a considerable quantity of army rations. A Michigan cavalry regiment is said to have been cut to pieces in the charge.

We have positive information, says the Knoxville Register, that General Joseph E. Johnson will in person command the army in Middle Tennessee. He is, probably, at his post now. It is also probable that Middle and East Tennessee will hereafter constitute one military department, under the command of Gen. Donelson.

Scouts report that Pinckney, Dawinskie and Ball's Islands, S. C., have been evacuated by the Federals. Forty-seven sail of vessels are reported at Hilton Head.

At a meeting at Halifax Court House, Monday last, the Hon. Thomas S. Flournoy was nominated as candidate for the next Governor of Virginia.

The Natchez Courier announces the death of George Prentiss, only son of the late Sargeant Prentiss, the distinguished orator. He was a member of the Natchez Southrons, and died of camp fever.

Michael Mulligan, a private of the Fifth Virginia Cavalry, was executed, by shooting, at Camp Lee, near Richmond, on the 30th.—His crime was desertion.

In the Virginia Senate, at Richmond, a bill has been introduced to suppress extortion.—Great complaint is made of the high prices charged for the necessaries of life by extortionists.

In the Confederate House of Representatives, on January 28, Mr. Sexton, of Texas, introduced a resolution which was agreed to,

that the Committee on the Judiciary be instructed to inquire into the expediency and propriety of providing by law, "to such an extent as may be within the power of Congress, for the disfranchisement of all such persons—resident citizens of the Confederate States—as may be clearly shown to have refused to aid in our present struggle for independence, or who may, in any way, have aided or assisted our enemies." Mr. Gray, of Texas, offered a resolution that the Judiciary Committee consider the expediency of so amending the sequestration laws as to authorize the Judges of the Courts, in their discretion, to postpone sale of confiscated lands and other property during the war. Agreed to. Also, a bill declaring the invalidity of all acts and proceedings affecting the rights of citizens, done under authority of the public enemy, within any State or locality temporarily under their control. Referred to Judiciary Committee.

## FROM THE WEST.

CAIRO, Feb. 3.—Vicksburg dates to the 30th ult. have been received. Gen. Grant had arrived. The work of widening and deepening the canal is progressing. The Confederates have planted a battery on the Mississippi shore, which commands the lower end of the canal.

The Richmond *Whig* of the 2d instant, says Longstreet, with thirteen brigades, has gone to Tennessee.

The gun boat "New Era" was attacked on Saturday night, at 11 o'clock, near Island No. 10, by guerrillas, who had three pieces of cannon. The boat returned fire with shell. The conflict lasted till near daylight, when the Confederates retired. Their force was believed to be between 2,500 and 3,000.

The operator at Paducah reports that the command at Fort Donelson was attacked at an early hour this morning, and at four this afternoon the engagement going on. Reinforcements have gone forward.

About half-past ten o'clock on Monday night, the boiler of the engine in the steam forge and rolling mill of Messrs. Trego, Thompson & Co., of Baltimore, exploded, causing the death of seven men and seriously injuring five others of the workmen there engaged. The boiler was raised in the air and forced over one hundred feet, and lodged in the bed of Harford Run.—The building, which was of frame, having an iron roof and girders, was almost totally destroyed in that portion where the engine was located, the wood thereof being set on fire.

A concerted and powerful influence presses on the Senate the banking scheme of the Secretary of the Treasury. It is listened to with more than favor. The desire for uniform currency grows daily, not only in Congress, but by representations from the North and West.

It is reported that the Committee of Ways and Means have agreed to recommend a large increase in the tax upon whisky and tobacco; in the case of the former at least 50 cents per gallon.

CONGRESS.—In the U. S. Senate, yesterday, the Postoffice Appropriation bill and the bill appointing a Deputy Register of the Treasury and a Solicitor of the War Department, were passed. Mr. Lane introduced a bill to stop the pay of unemployed military officers. The resolutions offered by Mr. McDougall, in condemnation of French interference in Mexico, were taken up, and Mr. McDougall made a speech in support of them. Mr. Sumner moved to lay the resolutions on the table, but before taking the question the Senate went into executive session. In the House of Representatives, yesterday, the Committee on Elections reported that B. F. Flanders and Michael Hahn, elected from the First and Second Congressional Districts of Louisiana, were entitled to their seats. The Bankrupt bill was laid on the table, yeas 62, nays 61, and a motion to reconsider the vote also laid on the table, thus killing the bill for the present session. A resolution was adopted calling for the evidence in the Fitz John Porter case, and also for the argument of Judge Advocate Holt in reference thereto. The bill to reorganize the pay department of the Army was rejected. The Military Committee reported a bill providing for the construction of a submarine telegraph line from Fortress Monroe to Galveston, Texas.

WAR NEWS.—A dispatch from Memphis states that Gen. Van Dorn, at the head of eight brigades of Confederates, left Granada, Miss., on the 24th ult., moving north towards Memphis. On the day mentioned there were some fifty thousand Confederates gathered there, consisting of cavalry, artillery and infantry. Fifteen thousand Confederates are reported south of the Memphis and Charleston railroad, marching north. Raids on the Federal lines and outposts were daily expected. This statement is partly confirmed by late Southern papers, which publish dispatches claiming that the Confederates have again captured Holly Springs.

Gen. Sloan, commanding the central district of Missouri, has issued an order that all guerrilla and Confederate recruiting officers that shall be captured in that district, be executed by the first commissioned officer into whose hands they may be delivered.

A body of Federal troops visited the town of Warrenton, Va., on Monday, but discovered no Confederates in the neighborhood. Some 80 stand of arms were captured in the town and destroyed.

Some excitement was occasioned at Yorktown, Va., a few days since, by the report that the Federal pickets had been driven in at Williamsburg, and that the Confederates were approaching in large force, but it proved to be only a raid of some cavalry, who fell back on the appearance of the Federal forces to meet them.

An arrival at New York reports that the Confederate steamer Retribution had burned four or five U. S. merchantmen near the island of St. Thomas.