

The Local News.

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ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE OFFICE.

ALEXANDRIA, VA.

CITY BUILDINGS OCCUPIED.—The Provost Marshal of this city proceeded to the city buildings yesterday afternoon, and took possession of all the offices occupied by the Mayor and Auditor, as also the chambers of the Board of Aldermen and Common Council. James A. English, Auditor, delivered up the keys of his office under protest, but we learn that the other office-rooms were unoccupied at the time they were taken possession of. The office of the Clerk of the County Court was also taken possession of.—The other county offices have been in possession of the United States military forces since the occupation of this city, in May last, by the forces under Col. Wilcox.

The following is the protest delivered to Captain Griffith, Provost Marshal, by the Auditor:

I, James A. English, Auditor of the city of Alexandria, do hereby enter my protest against the forcible taking from me, by military authority, the keys of the Auditor's office, and the books and papers therein contained, and deny that the laws of the State of Virginia, either of Richmond or Wheeling, authorize any such proceedings.

Given under my hand this 18th day of November, 1861. JAS. A. ENGLISH,
Auditor of the city of Alexandria.

U. S. STEAMER FREEBORN AGROUND.—The U. S. steamer Freeborn, while passing the mouth of Hunting Creek last night, ran aground on the shoals in that vicinity, where she yet remains stuck fast. Vigorous efforts were made this morning to relieve her, a number of steam-tugs having come down from Washington for that purpose. The efforts thus far have been vain, and, as the time for high water for to-day has already passed, there is no probability of getting the steamer off until to-night, when efforts to that end will be renewed, and additional force employed for the purpose. As the nights are now moonlit, thus rendering it easy to work, it is expected the steamer will be afloat before to-morrow. The water of the river, diminished by the recent blow, is rapidly returning to its bed, and each succeeding flood tide rises higher than its predecessor, so that this will much facilitate operations.

THE RELIEF ASSOCIATION.—The Volunteer Relief Association continues its beneficent operations, carrying cheer to many a home that would otherwise be comfortless, and ameliorating, with the hand of charity, the calamities which war has brought upon this devoted city. Its expenditures are large, and as its operations are conducted exclusively upon a cash basis, prompt payment of the contributions to its fund is absolutely indispensable to its proper management. We trust, therefore, that all who are interested in the success of the Association, will make payment to the treasurer, that no arrearages may accumulate to embarrass the action of the Association, or diminish its bounties to the poor and destitute.

RIVER MOVEMENTS.—A large number of small vessels passed down the river this morning. Steam-tugs were busy, too, passing from the grounded steamer, off the mouth of Hunting Creek, to the Navy Yard. Nothing arrived from below during the morning.

THE MILITARY COURT.—The usual session of the Military Court was not held this morning, having been postponed until this afternoon.

WILD FOWL.—Large numbers of wild fowl were observed this morning, passing over this place, going South.

THE WEATHER.—The weather is as delightful as it can be at this season of the year.

A dispatch from Fernandina, Fla., dated 14th, says that a Federal fleet, steering southward, has sailed past that place.

It is stated in the New York Herald that the Irish people in New York rather rejoice at the idea of a brush with England—and are pleased that Com. Wilkes boarded and took Mason and Slidell from an English vessel.

The New York Journal of Commerce in an article "on the views and intentions of the administration," says, "The cabinet is, and has been, at all times, a unit on the war policy. The intentions of the administration have not varied, nor has there been any hesitation or faltering on the part of any member of the cabinet. The war will be prosecuted with caution, and prudence, but with unabating vigor, and advances will be made as soon as the strategical plans of the campaign are so far carried out, as to make an advance absolutely certain to be not only successful, but overwhelming. These plans of the campaign do not depend on the army of the Potomac alone, but include the movements in the West, and along the coast, as well as certain other movements."

The City of Manchester, from Liverpool, 7th inst., brings four days later news from Europe. The convention between England, France and Spain, concerning intervention in Mexico, was signed at London on the 31st ult. Active preparations were making for the expedition. A surmise of ulterior designs is again afloat. The London Times finds fault with Secretary Seward's despatch to Lord Lyons, and ridicules his circular to the Governors of States concerning fortifications. The London Herald and the Post are also occupied with the correspondence of Lord Lyons and Mr. Seward. It is believed that France requires a large loan. The continental news generally is not important; grain quiet and steady—but corn declined a little.

In his speech to the New York Bank Committee on Saturday last, Mr. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury, it is said, "gave them very strong assurances that the government now saw their way clearly to quell this rebellion; that they had information which warranted him in saying that the public would soon hear glad tidings of success, more startling and more effective in their results than those from Port Royal and the West; that neither the government nor Gen. McClellan ever had the least idea of placing the army in winter quarters, but on the contrary, the military plans all contemplated regular, systematic and energetic activity in pushing forward."

In another paragraph, it is stated that the new and beautiful residence of Mr. Custis Grymes, near Matthias' Point, was burned down, on Monday week, by the troops who came over from the Maryland shore, a portion of Gen. Sickles' brigade. It may be added that the house has been so perforated and injured by shells and bombs thrown from the Potomac flotilla, during the last few months, that it was entirely untenable, and has not been occupied for some time.

Beaufort, S. C., was visited by a reconnoitering party from the Federal fleet, on the 11th inst. The arsenal was visited, and a light house apparatus and a number of arms taken. Some of the dwellings had been entered and pillaged by negroes, but this had been stopped.

The New York Tribune says: "A correspondent requests us to inform our readers how a Superintendent of Indian Affairs, with \$2,000 salary, can save \$100,000 in four years. The problem is beyond our arithmetic."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.—The LOCAL NEWS acknowledges itself indebted to Mr. T. G. Palmer in the sum of several bottles of sparkling cider, equal to most of the champagne herabouts. It is really an excellent article, and persons in need of refreshments of that description would do well to call at the establishment of Mr. Palmer, Mansion House block, Fairfax street, and look at his large and varied assortment.

THE LADIES RELIEF ASSOCIATION.—This excellent charity is now founded on a firm basis, and proves a valuable auxiliary in the work of feeding and clothing the indigent portion of this community. Meetings are held weekly at the rooms of the Young Men's Christian Association, and are well attended.

Gen. Fremont is expected every day in Washington.

GENERAL NEWS.

The St. Louis News states that while Gen. Fremont's train was on its way from Springfield to that city, Capt. Swain, of the Quartermaster's Department, with the United States mail for Springfield, one of the officers in the train of the returning General, took two of the bags from Capt. Swain, in spite of his protestation, cut them open and overhauled their contents. When Captain Swain remonstrated against this outrage, the perpetrator threatened him with arrest. The desecrated mail bags have been brought back to St. Louis and deposited at the Post-office.

The Washington Republican seems to think that the battle at Picketon, Ky., has "resulted in the capture of fifty Confederates, instead of 2,000, as first reported," and adds, "we are only too happy to get off without defeat."

The soldiers who have lately been paid off on the Potomac lines, it is said, are sending to their families at the North considerable sums.

Messrs. Dulin and Bush, of Fairfax county, were arrested on a charge of giving information which led to the capture on Saturday last of a detachment of New York troops, and their wagons, near Fall's Church. They have both been hitherto regarded as Union men.

The captains of the steamers which carried the Federal troops to the Eastern Shore of Virginia represent that a large number of the people there profess undoubted loyalty to the United States, and welcome the troops.

The New York Tribune urges that Mason and Slidell should be forthwith imprisoned in the famous New York Tombs.

The correspondence between the Confederate States' Secretary of War, and General Winder, in relation to the selection, by lot, from among the Federal prisoners, of hostages for the safety of certain captured privateers, ordered to be tried in New York, is published in the Richmond Enquirer. The officers on whom the lot fell were, Col. Corcoran, Lee, Cogswell, Wilcox, Woodruff and Wood; Lieut. Colonel's Bowman and Neff; Majors Potter, Revere, and Vodge; Capt. Rockwood, Bowman and Keffer. They are to be placed in prison, and treated as the aforesaid privateers are treated; and if the latter are executed, they are ordered for execution. Arrangements to avoid such dreadful retaliatory measures will doubtless be made, on both sides.

The friends of Col. Dixon S. Miles are much aggrieved at the finding of the recent Court of Inquiry, in his case. It has not yet been approved by the commanding general. Col. Miles is to receive, to-morrow, the sword voted to him by the Maryland Legislature before the present war commenced.

Gen. H. H. Lockwood, of Delaware, commands the Federal force thrown into Accomac and Northampton counties.

The New York Tribune affirms that a movement for the extinction of slavery is on foot in Maryland.

So far as the Northern journals have reached us, they all, or nearly all, justify the arrest of Mason and Slidell, and applaud the summary method which was taken by Com. Wilkes to get possession of the obnoxious emissaries.

In the final accounts of the battle of Belmont, the Federal loss is now put down at 719; the loss of the Confederates 500.

The Savannah papers announce the arrival at a Southern port of two English steamers with munitions of war, arms, and stores, medicines, clothing, &c., for the Confederate army.

The property of Com. Tatnall, of the Confederate Navy, at Sacketts' Harbor, N. Y., has been seized and will be confiscated by the Federal authorities.

A man in Ohio reports that last week, a war broke out among the bees which he kept near his house. Seventy swarms divided and fought a desperate battle. The ground was covered with the killed. His family had to escape from the house—numbers of fowls were stung to death—and passengers along the road fled to avoid danger.

WAR NEWS.

A skirmish occurred near Fall's Church, Va., on Monday afternoon, when "a stampede occurred in the Brooklyn 14th Regiment," owing to the approach of a party of Confederate cavalry. Two New York regiments were then ordered up, and the affair ended. One of the federal troops was wounded.

It appears that the late affair at Picketon, Ky., has been much exaggerated. The number of killed, wounded, and prisoners, on both sides was entirely incorrect in the first despatches.

The federal naval force at Newport News has been increased, in order to check a Confederate expedition fitting out in James river, of which three or four private boats are said to form a part.

Gen. Phelps' command are building comfortable huts for winter quarters at Newport News.

At the recent battle at Belmont, in Missouri, Capt. D. Welby Armstrong, of the Confederate army was killed.

The Confederates are still crowding troops into Winchester to oppose the advance of Col. Kelly's command, who they imagine is much nearer Winchester than he reported at last accounts. The defences of that place are being strengthened and advanced.

About 300 of Col. Turner Ashby's Confederate cavalry are stationed at Martinsburg, and picketed the various points on the Potomac down to Harper's Ferry.

The Fredericksburg papers give an account of the movement of the federal troops, at Matthias Point, on Monday week, when they crossed over from Maryland. Mr. Baker, of Col. Taylor's cavalry, out as a picket, was shot by a private and wounded. The dwelling houses of Mr. Custis Grimes, and Mr. Benjamin Grymes, with the property in and about them, were burned and destroyed.—The barns, stacks, &c., (and one report says the dwelling house) of Mr. H. Mercer Tennant were burned. Liberty, the residence of Mrs. Martha C. Stuart, was surrounded, and Mr. Dent, of Maryland, and McNally, who were in the house, captured. Two of the Misses Snowden, of Alexandria, were at this house, and one report is, that all the ladies escaped to the woods in their night clothes; another report is that the ladies remained in the house and were not molested. These ladies had previously made the most earnest solicitations to the bearer of a flag of truce passing through Aquia to be allowed to return to their parents in Alexandria, whom they had not seen for six months.

Gen. Thomas has ordered Gen. Sheaf to fall back from Camp Calvert, near London, Ky., to Danville, where the Union forces will concentrate to oppose Gen. Sidney A. Johnson, who is reported to be advancing and threatening Cincinnati, Louisville or Lexington with 40,000 men. The Fourteenth, Seventeenth and Thirty eighth Ohio, and Thirty-third Indiana regiments immediately took up the march, but a majority of the Tennessee brigade refused to turn their faces backward, and it was deemed expedient to order them, with the Third Kentucky regiment, to return to their camp.

All the old directors of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, (with the exception of three who declined) have been re-elected. The full reports of the affairs of the Road have been postponed for the present.

In almost every newspaper that is now opened a paragraph meets the eye to the effect that, "we learn that the report we published yesterday was entirely incorrect"—alluding to some rumor or report concerning the war.

It is said that Com. Wilkes captured Mason and Slidell, on his own responsibility, and without orders; but that the government will sustain his action and maintain its legality. It is further said that the government have received all the papers and documents which were in possession of the arrested persons.

Gen. Beauregard, it is said, is now at Centreville, Virginia, at the head of a large force.

The household effects of the late Senator Douglas were sold in Washington, on Monday.