

The Local News.

COMMENCED
October 7, 1861.

ALEXANDRIA, FRIDAY EVENING, JANUARY 10, 1862.

PRINTED AT THE
ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE OFFICE.

THE MANSION HOUSE AFFAIR.—The town was rife yesterday with rumors of a diabolical attempt to blow up the United States hospital, at the Mansion House, in this place, and "they says" went so far as to declare that a prominent citizen had been arrested, handcuffed, and taken to Washington, charged with connection with the attempt. This morning the following statement is found among the telegraphic despatches in the Northern journals—all growing out of a barrel of safety fuse found among the stock of Barley and Triplett, late dealers in "Hardware and Notions," whose store was in one of the wings of the Mansion House:—

"An attempt was made on Wednesday night to blow up the Mansion House in Alexandria. This building was formerly occupied as a hotel, but now as an hospital. A barrel had been secreted in the cellar filled with powder and projectiles, and a fuse was found extending from there to the stable. In proximity to the combustibles, lucifer matches and Chinese crackers had been plentifully distributed, and the fuse end at the stable had actually been ignited. But this fact was fortunately discovered by the guard and the progress of the slow fire extinguished. But for this watchfulness and prompt action, not only would several hundred lives probably have been lost, but other casualties resulted."

This announcement was startling to the inhabitants of this place. The whole affair will doubtless be thoroughly investigated.—Such an attempt made in a building occupied and guarded by the military, would have been strange indeed. No man with the proper feelings of a man, but would denounce and deprecate such a horrible and atrocious design, which if successful must not only have killed the sick and wounded, but scattered destruction through a large portion of the town, and its inhabitants and citizens.

The facts of the case as they come to us areas follows:—The store and keys of Barley & Triplett, have been in charge of the late Provost Court, since it was taken possession of at the application of certain creditors, some months since. On Wednesday, Mr. W. N. Brown, Agent for Mr. Barley, discovered that the back door of the basement was open, and fearing for the safety of the goods, gave notice at the military headquarters, and was informed that a guard would be placed there. On Wednesday night about 9½ o'clock, Mr. B. was informed that a light had been seen in the store, and upon proceeding there, found soldiers inside. He called upon Dr. Porter, U. S. A., in charge of the hospital, to inquire into the matter, and hearing that dangerous combustibles had been found in Barley's store, proceeded there in company with the Chief of the Hospital. In the store he found a barrel of safety fuse, such as is used by the railroad companies of this city. The barrel, the head of which was partially broken in, exhibited no marks of any burning whatever—and was directed to "BARLEY & TRIPLETT," being apparently a portion of their stock, not in the cellar, but on the second floor. One of the soldiers present said he had found a piece of the fuse about three yards long, lying in a ditch some seventy five feet distant from any building burning at both ends. Gen. McLane and Col. Freese was sent for, and at once made an examination of the building and grounds. No "powder" of any kind was discovered anywhere. Chinese crackers and matches were found in the upper story where they are known to have been, when an inventory of the stock was taken by a commission of the Military Court, some months ago. It is well known that fuse was kept for sale by Barley & Triplett, and bought from them in large quantities by railroad agents some of whom are now in this city; and at the time of the inventory mentioned a barrel of it was examined by the commission to ascertain whether keeping had diminished its value. Out of this has grown all these rumors; it is a fit illustration of the thousand that are current every day.

THE MAYOR'S OFFICE.—A few unimportant cases came up this morning—firing pistols in the streets, drunkenness, &c., which were disposed of according to law by fines. Several licences were also granted.

At "Concert Hall," to-night, Miss WALTON will appear among other artists. The public may expect a grand treat in a musical view. Jan 10—It

ATTEMPT AT BURGLARY.—A bold attempt was made last night to break open the store of John T. Cooke, at the corner of Prince and Pitt streets. The doors are half glass casement, with iron-wire bars, in lieu of shutters. They are secured within by a wooden bar, which was kept in place by a bolt. The burglars prized one of the wire bars aside, and broke a glass, so that by the insertion of his hand he could readily have drawn the bolt. It is supposed that at this point the thief was frightened from his purpose.

ARREST.—W. W. Harper, of the Dry Goods' firm of Harper & Bro., was arrested this morning, charged with "refusing to sell goods and give specie change for U. S. Treasury notes at a less discount than five per cent." He made the refusal to a negro boy who had bought some calico, and was soon after arrested at the instance of an U. S. officer by a file of soldiers and carried before the Provost Marshal, who released Mr. Harper and said he would refer the case to the Military Governor.

THE RIVER POTOMAC.—The fog on the river still seriously interferes with navigation. Several U. S. steamers are at the wharves detained by the fog. The steamer Collyer, is however, running between Alexandria and Washington. The steam tug Telegraph yet lies at the foot of Duke street. She will, doubtless, be soon made ready for running again.

Charles J. Baker, late acting Mayor of Baltimore, in his message to the City Council, devotes a share of the document to the defence of the "loyalty" of Geo. W. Brown, the Mayor who was arrested in September last, and is now confined in Warren. He says that there is not a more "loyal" man in Maryland.

The Maryland House of Delegates has adopted resolutions of thanks to Gov. Hicks for his course during his administration.

A little child in Troy, N. Y., died on Christmas eve, from eating painted confectionery.

It is said that Burnside's expedition was considerably reinforced before its sailing, by troops from the Potomac lines.

The Washington correspondent of the N. Y. Herald says:—"The greatest activity has been going on in the Quartermaster's Department to-day and to-night. For hospital purposes the most elaborate preparations have been made for some time."

Gen. Mansfield's reason for asking to be relieved of duty in his present position is, that Gen. Wool, by a recent proclamation, stigmatized certain acts of Gen. Mansfield's as "vandalism."

There are said to be over four hundred cases of small-pox among the civilians in Washington.

The loyalty of Gen. Stone is now called in question by the letter-writers for the Northern press. He has, it is said, replied in strong terms to the remarks of Mr. Sumner in the Senate, which has increased the indignation against him. It is reported, that the name of Gen. Stone will be stricken from the rolls of the army.

Rev. Dr. Wilmer, of Philadelphia, was the person, whose trunks were searched at Old Point, and a quantity of clothing, &c., found in them. A writer in the Baltimore American says, "whatever he carried with him, in a manner so public, and with the purpose of submitting it to inspection, was certainly not smuggled." It was doubtless designed for his own family use, upon his estate in Virginia, to which he was removing with a large family, and where he has numerous dependents and many servants.

Gov. Brown, of Georgia, and the lower House of the Legislature of that State have had another dispute.

The Nashville Gazette says that instead of the loss by the late burning of ordnance supplies in that city reaching two million of dollars, as reported, it will not exceed, at an extravagant estimate, \$600,000.

The U. S. House of Representatives has struck out the annual appropriation for the Coast Survey.

GENERAL NEWS.

The hotel business in New York is said to be in a declining condition.

A man, lately employed in boating hay at Washington, was murdered in the streets of Philadelphia on Wednesday night.

Gen. Scott is still in New York and his health improving it is said. The cause of his coming back so suddenly from France is still unknown.

Both in England and France, at the last dates, it appears that the release of Mason and Slidell was confidently expected.

In a debate in the U. S. Senate yesterday, on the gun-boat bill, Mr. Doolittle "advised" the naval committee to inquire of the Secretary of the Navy "as to some information," and was very tartly answered by Mr. Hale, that "when they wanted his advice they would ask for it."

Thirty-odd men are under trial before a court martial in Missouri, for "bridge burning." They were captured by the Federal troops, and several were in the Confederate army.

The humane conduct of A. H. Stephens, of Georgia, in visiting the sick in the hospitals in Richmond, and administering to them comfort and consolation, is highly praised in the Southern papers.

In a speech delivered by Gen. Beauregard in Richmond, he stated that at the battle of Bull Run, when he saw the advancing reinforcements of Gen. Johnson, he thought at first it was a column of Federal troops under Gen. Patterson, and had it been so, he would have been compelled to fall upon his reserves and continued the battle the next day.

The Hudson river, at the city of Hudson, can now be crossed on the ice.

Prices of flour and wheat are tending downwards in New York. Dry goods generally very firm, and prices tending upwards.

The Washington Republican comments upon what it terms, apparently without cause, "the pro-slavery fanaticism of the great body of the officers of the U. S. regular army, which has thus far paralyzed the war, has proved too strong for the President and Cabinet." It wants an "advance"—but it clamors for a kind of "anti-slavery" advance of the Federal troops.

The N. Y. World and other New York papers are denouncing and complaining of the action of the U. S. Congress, especially in reference to financial matters; whilst the Washington Republican regards such remarks "as proof of a settled plan to break down the legislative representation of the people," &c.

The subject of the next meeting of the Baltimore Conference of the M. E. Church in Baltimore, is attracting much attention among the members of that church.

A number of persons from the Southern States are now in Washington seeking employment. Many of them take the oath of allegiance to the U. S. government.

The multiplicity of the possible objects of taxation, was well illustrated in the resolution offered in the U. S. House of Representatives on Wednesday, by Mr. Colfax, directing the Committee on Ways and Means to inquire into the expediency of taxing railroad passenger travel, the transfer of stock, the discounting of notes, all bills of exchange and all suits in courts of record.

The first division of Gen. Burnside's expedition sailed from Annapolis yesterday morning. The vessels of the second division had steam up and were preparing to leave yesterday afternoon. The whole of the expedition will probably reach Old Point to-day.

It is understood that the command, under Gen. Lane, is designed for an expedition through the section of country along the Arkansas border into Texas, simultaneously with the movement of the divisions of the U. S. army.

A letter from Hagerstown states that it was a body of cavalry under Col. Ashby which drove back the Federal troops protecting the working parties on the Baltimore and Ohio railroad across the Potomac, and that the ten thousand Confederates who appeared before Hancock under Gen. Jackson were all imagination.

Wendell Phillips has been delighting the radical abolitionists of Boston with one of his characteristic speeches on slavery. His abuse of the Federal government and its policy was unstinted.

The joint committee of the U. S. Congress appointed on the 19th of December to examine into the conduct of the war have assiduously applied themselves to that duty. They have been in session nearly ever since.

The U. S. Senate Committee on the judiciary have come to the conclusion, by a vote of six to one, to report against the expulsion of Senator Jesse D. Bright, of Indiana.

It is stated that Mr. Russell, of the London Times, will return to England about the first of next month. He complains of ill health and bad treatment.

The U. S. Army Medical Board report that the prevalence of typhoid fever in some of the camps is owing to malaria, from exposed situations, and the disease does not exist as an epidemic.

Mr. Roberson, of Manchester, N. H., who has a number of contrabands employed at Beaufort, S. C., in getting out cotton, writes, that they require too much watching and won't work if they can help it. He significantly adds—"certain emancipationists ought to travel among negroes south of Washington, to know what negroes are."

Lamartine is now 72 years old—and goes to England next spring:—not, we hope, on a "contribution" tour.

D. U. Martin, the wherry and berry man, is now mining in California, and subsists almost entirely on grapes and apples. The same fruits formed his diet on his sea-voyage to the Isthmus, and bananas and oranges on the Pacific side. Mr. M. is of opinion that it is not the eating of tropical fruits that produces fatal effects in warm climates, but the drinking of poisonous liquors.

The obsequies of the late Gen. E. D. Baker took place in San Francisco on the 11th ult. The ceremonies were very imposing. Every class of society was represented in the procession.

M. Thouvenel's despatch to the French Minister at Washington had been carefully considered by the English press, and gave great apparent satisfaction to the government of Great Britain. The London Times asks, with England and France united, what third Power would dare differ with their decisions?

We have no important intelligence from the flotilla on the Lower Potomac. The navigation of the river below is still unobstructed by ice.

The immense increase of the duties of the U. S. War Department has required the Secretary to ask Congress for an increase of clerks, laborers, and messengers in the various bureaus of the department.

The New York Herald is great upon conspiracies. It says that the "Wall street banks have entered into a conspiracy against the Secretary of the Treasury, so as to defeat his plans of finance, and deprive the administration of the means of carrying on the war."

Mr. Powell, of Kentucky, presented in the U. S. Senate, on Wednesday, the resolutions of the Legislature of Kentucky, protesting against Congressional interference with slavery.

The Washington letter of the Philadelphia News says:—"The 'squatter merchants' complain of the dullness of trade. The soldiers as a general thing are very sensibly beginning to realize the fact that the Government rations are more conducive to their health than the luxuries provided by Sutlers' stores, and the consequence is that their families will reap the advantage."

The Charleston Mercury estimates the loss in real estate by the late fire at about \$3,500,000, on which was an insurance for about \$1,500,000. The chief has been borne by local companies.

The New York correspondent of the Philadelphia Ledger says there is great complaint in New York at the delay in settling claims against the U. S. government.