New Orleans Bee.

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NEW ORLEANS:
WEDNESDAY MORNING, DEC 23, 1863

Sales at Auction To-Day.

By D. E. Morphy, at 10 o'clock, on the Levee, head of Third street, Fourth District, potatoes; at 11½ o'clock, at the corner of Common and New Levee streets, flour, ham, beef, rum and coffee.

By R. T. Montgomery, at 11 o'clock, at their auction mart, 13 place; at 11 o'clock, at 87 Camp street, rich furniture and painting; at 11 o'clock, at 80 Camp street, salt.

By R. T. Keller, at 10½ o'clock, at No. 75 Camp street, glasses, &c.

By McCerren & Landry, at 11 o'clock, at their auction mart, jewelry.

By our advertisement we see that Messrs McCerren & Landry have a large sale at their auction mart, at 11 o'clock, of fine jewelry, plated ware, &c.

D E Morphy calls the attention of buyers to the sales of flour, hams, beef, rum, coffee and 796 barrels potatoes. See his auction advertisements.

Dealers and speculators in salt will not fail to attend the extensive sale of R. T. Montgomery at the salesroom, 93 Camp street, at 11 o'clock, this day. The cargo of ship Gorilla, from Liverpool, consisting of 3,363 sacks, coarse and fine, will be sold by samples, offering a fine chance for safe investment.

The attention of our readers is particularly directed to the advertisements of R T. Montgomery, auctioneer, who offers unusual inducements to parties requiring furniture of a rich and costly nature. The collection consists of six elegant rosewood and brocatelle parlor sets, in crimson and gold, blue, green and other desirable colors. Also, six superb bedroom sets, twenty French plate mirrors, a portion of which are very elegant; rosewood armoire, with French plate-glass doors, the finest in the city; and in fact everything beautiful and durable in the way of furniture will be offered at this sale, after which thirteen Pleyel, Erard and Faivre pianos will be sold, the whole to close consignments, presenting at once the most attractive sale of the season. Purchasers should not fail to take advantage of this splendid opportunity to procure rich goods at a low figure. The sale will take place on the second floor of the auction mart, 87 Camp street.

HAIR DRESSING, WIGS, PERFUMERY, &c. — The wig-making, hair dressing and perfumery establishment of Mr E. Rolland, as will be seen by an announcement elsewhere, has been transferred to No. 42 Chartres street, between Bienville and Customhouse, where the numerous customers of the proprietor are informed that he will continue the manufacture and sale of all articles pertaining to the hair at much reduced prices. A private saloon is attached to the establishment for the accommodation of ladies and children who want the hair dressed, shampooed or cut.

FOR BAYOU LAFOURCHE. — The swift passenger packet Belle Creole, C. E Whitmore master, is announced to leave her landing, foot of Canal street, to-day, at 2 P. M., for Bayou Lafourche, Napoleonville and all intermediate landings on the Bayou, taking freight for Lafourche with the privilege of lightering.

Reported Peace Propositions.

The New York *Herald* has the following in a Washington dispatch of the 12th:

A report has been in circulation here to-day, and has, it is understood, found currency in New York, that six commissioners were actually on their way to this city to negotiate for terms of peace between the rebels and the government.

This statement is doubtless premature, although late private advices from Richmond and other parts of the Confederacy indicate that, under the pressure of continued disasters and constantly increasing privation and distress, the people are rapidly nearing the point where the formation of such a commission, outside of the rebel government, and without its concurrence, is not improbable.

This report has been so often put in circulation that it is generally regarded as an attempt to affect the stock market. In this instance very probably it has been put out as a feeler to ascertain how such an effort would be met on the part of the government and the people of the loyal States.

The Message of Jeff. Davis.

THE MILITARY SITUATION.

The message opens with a general review of the military situation. It says:

Grave reverses befel our arms soon after your departure from Richmond. Early in July our strongholds at Vicksburg and Port Hudson, together with their entire garrisons, capitulated to the combined land and naval forces of the enemy. The important interior position of Jackson next fell into their temporary possession. Our unexpected assault on the post at Helena was followed, at a later period, by the invasion of Arkansas, and the retreat of our army from Little Rock gave to the enemy the control of the important valley in which it is situated.

After referring then to the resolute spirit of the people rising superior to the despondency resulting from these reverses, and to the successful resistance of Charleston and the Pennsylvania campaign of General Lee, the message proceeds:

The effective check thus opposed to the advance of invaders at all points was such as to afford hope of their early expulsion from portions of the territory previously occupied by them, when the painfully surprised public, by the intelligence that the officer in command of Cumberland Gap had surrendered that important and easily defensible pass without firing a shot, upon the summons of a force still believed to have been inadequate to the reduction, and when reinforcements were within supporting distance and had been ordered to his aid.—The entire garrison, including the commander, being still held as prisoners by the enemy, I am unable to suggest any explanation of this disaster, which laid open Eastern Tennessee and Southwestern Virginia to hostile operations, and broke the line of communication between the seat of Government and Middle Tennessee.—This easy success of the enemy was followed by an advance of General Rosecrans in Georgia, and our army evacuated Chattanooga and availed itself of the opportunity thus afforded of winning on the field of Chickamauga one of the most brilliant and decisive victories of the war. This signal defeat of General Rosecrans was followed by his retreat into Chattanooga, where his imperilled position had the immediate effect of relieving the pressure of the invasion at other points, forcing the concentration, for his relief, of large bodies of troops withdrawn from the armies of the Mississippi Valley and in Northern Virginia. The combined forces thus accumulated against us in Tennessee so greatly outnumbered our army as to encourage the enemy to attack. After a long and severe battle, in which great carnage was inflicted on him, some of our troops inexplicably abandoned positions of great strength, and by a disorderly retreat compelled the commander to withdraw the forces elsewhere successful, and finally to retire with his whole army to a position some twenty or thirty miles to the rear. It is believed that if the troops who yielded to the assault had fought with the valor which they had displayed on previous occasions, and which was manifested in this battle on the other parts of the lines, the enemy would have been repulsed with very great slaughter, and our success would have escaped the misfortune and the army the mortification of the first defeat that has resulted from misconduct by the troops. In the meantime the army of General Burnside was driven from all its field positions in Eastern Tennessee, and forced to retreat into its intrenchments at Knoxville, where for some weeks it was threatened with capture by the forces under General Longstreet. No information has reached me of the final result of the operations of our commander, though intelligence has arrived of his withdrawal from that place.

While, therefore, our success in driving the enemy from our soil has not equalled the expectations confidently entertained at the commencement of the campaign, his further progress has been checked. If we are forced to report losses in Tennessee and Arkansas, we are not without ground for congratulation on successes in Louisiana and Texas. On the sea coast he is exhausted by vain efforts to capture our ports, while on the northern frontier he has in turn felt the pressure and dreads the renewal of invasion.

FOREIGN RELATIONS.

I regret to inform you that there has been no improvement in the state of our relations with foreign countries since my message in January last. On the contrary, there has been a still greater divergence in the conduct of European nations from that practical impartiality which alone deserves the name of neutrality, and their spirit, in some cases, has assumed a character positively unfriendly.

After defending, in the manner just stated, the course of the British government on the subject of the blockade, her Majesty's Foreign Secretary intimates care to leave no doubt of the further purpose of the British government to prevent our purchase of vessels in Great Britain, while supplying our enemies with rifles and other munitions of war, and states the intention to apply to Parliament for the furtherance of this design. He gives to the United States the assurance that he will do in their favor not only "everything that the law of nations requires, everything that the present Foreign Enlistment act requires, but that he will ask the sanction of Parliament "to further measures that her Majesty's ministers may still add." This language is so unmistakably an official exposition of the policy adopted by the British government in relation to our affairs, that the duty imposed on me by the constitution, of giving you, from time to time, "information of the state of the confederacy," would not have been performed if I had failed to place it distinctly before you.

I refer you for fuller details on this whole subject to the correspondence of the State Department, which accompanies this message. The facts which I have briefly narrated are, I trust, sufficient to enable you to appreciate the true nature of the neutrality proclaimed in this war. It is not in my power to apprise you to what extent the government of France shares the views so unreservedly avowed by that of Great Britain, no published correspondence of the French government on this subject having been received. No public protest has been made, however, has been made by his Imperial Majesty against the prohibition to trade with us, imposed on French citizens by the paper blockade of the United States, although I have reason to believe that an unsuccessful attempt was made on his part to secure the assent of the British government to a course of action more consonant with the dictates of public law and with the demands of justice towards us.

For nearly three years this government has exercised unquestioned jurisdiction over many millions of willing and valiant people. It has met and defeated vast armies of invaders, who have in vain sought its subversion. Supported by the confidence and affection of its citizens, the confederacy has lacked no element which distinguishes an independent nation, according to the principles of public law. Its legislative, executive and judicial departments, each in its sphere, have performed their appropriate functions with a regularity as undisturbed as in a time of profound peace, and the whole energies of the people have been developed in the organization of vast armies, while their rights and liberties have rested secure under the protection of the courts of justice. This confederacy is either independent or it is a dependency of the United States, for no other earthly power claims the right to govern it. Without one historic fact, on which the pretension can rest, without one line or word of treaty or covenant, which can give color to title, the United States having asserted, the British government has chosen to concede, that these sovereign States are dependencies of the government which is administered at Washington. Great Britain has accordingly entertained with that government the closest and most intimate relations, while refusing on its demand ordinary amicable intercourse with us, and has, under arrangements made with the other nations of Europe, not only denied our just claim of admission into the family of nations, but interposed a passive though effectual bar to the acknowledgement of our rights by other Powers. So soon as it had become apparent, by the declarations of the British ministers, in the debates of the British Parliament in July last, that her Majesty's government was determined to persist in a course of policy which, under professions of neutrality, had become subservient to the designs of our enemy, I felt it my duty to recall the commissioners formerly accredited to that court, and the correspondence on the subject is submitted to you.

FINANCES.

I shall, therefore, until we are able to pursue the precise mode required by the constitution, deem it my duty to approve any law levying the taxation which you are bound to impose for the defense of the country, in any other practicable mode which shall distribute the burthen uniformly and impartially on the whole property of the people.

In your former legislation you have sought to avoid the increase in the volume of notes in circulation by offering inducements to voluntary funding. The measures adopted for that purpose have been but partially successful, and the evil has now reached such a magnitude as to permit no other remedy than the compulsory reduction of the currency to the amount required by the business of the country. This reduction should be accompanied by a pledge that, under no stress of circumstances, will that amount be exceeded. No possible mode of using the credit of the government can be so disastrous as one which disturbs the basis of all exchanges, renders impossible all calculations of future values, augments, in constantly increasing proportions, the price of all commodities, and so depreciates all fixed wages, salaries and incomes as to render them inadequate to bare subsistence. If to these be added the still more fatal influence on the morals and character of the people, to which I have already adverted, I am persuaded you will concur in the conclusion that an inflexible adherence to a limitation of the currency as a fixed sum is an indispensable element of any system of finance now to be adopted.

The holders of the currency now outstanding can only be protected in the recovery of their just claims by submitting for their notes some other security. If the currency is not promptly and promptly reduced, the present scale of inflated prices will not only continue to exist, but by the very fact of the large amounts thus made requisite to the conduct of the war, those prices will much sooner and more extravagantly, and the whole system will fall under its own weight, thus rendering the redemption of the debt impossible, and destroying its whole value in the hands of the holder. If, on the contrary, a funded debt, with interest secured by adequate taxation, can be substituted for the outstanding currency, its entire amount will be made available to the holder and the government will be in a condition enabling it, beyond the reach of any possible contingency, to prosecute the war to a successful issue. It is, therefore, demanded, as well by the interest of the creditor as of the country at large, that the evidences of the public debt now outstanding in the shape of Treasury notes be converted into bonds bearing a definite interest, with a provision for taxation sufficient to secure punctual payment, and final redemption of the whole debt.

It may be added that, in considering this subject, the people ought steadily to keep in view that the government, in contracting debt, is but their agent; that its debt is their debt. As the currency is held exclusively by ourselves, it is obvious that, if each person held Treasury notes in exact proportion to the valuation of his whole means, each would in fact owe himself the amount of the notes held by him, and, were it possible to distribute the currency among the people in this exact proportion, a tax levied on the currency alone, to an amount sufficient to reduce it to proper limits, would afford the best of all remedies. Under such circumstances, the notes remaining in the hands of each holder, after the payment of his tax, would be worth quite as much as the whole property he held, for it would purchase at least an equal amount of commodities. This result cannot be perfectly attained by any device of legislation, but it can be approximated by taxation. A tax on all values has the effect, not only to impose a due share of the burden on the noteholder, but to force those who have few or none of the notes to part with a share of their possessions to those who hold the notes in excess, in order to obtain the means of satisfying the demands of the tax gatherer. This is the only mode by which it is practicable to make all contribute as equally as possible in the burden which all are bound to share, and it is for this reason that taxation adequate to the public exigencies, under our present circumstances, must be the basis of any funding system or other remedy for restoring stability to our finances.

THE ARMY.

Although we have lost many of the best of our soldiers and noble patriots of our citizens—the sad and unavoidable result of our battles and toils of such a campaign as that which will render the year 1863 ever memorable in our annals—the army is believed to be, in all respects in better condition than at any previous period of the war. Our gallant defenders, now veterans, familiar with danger, hardened by exposure, and confident in themselves and their officers, endure privations with cheerful fortitude and welcome battle with alacrity. The officers, by experience in field service and the action of examining boards in relieving the incompetent, are now greatly more efficient than at the commencement of the war. The aspect upon the country was fully justified, that, regarded as a whole, for character, valor, efficiency and patriotic devotion, our army has not been equalled by any like number of troops in the history of war.

In view of the large conscription recently ordered by the enemy and their subsequent call for volunteers, to be followed, if ineffectual, by a still further draft, we are admonished that no effort must be spared to add largely to our effective force as promptly as possible. The sources of supply are to be found by restoring to the army all who are improperly absent, putting an end to substitution, modifying the Exemption law, restricting details, and placing in the ranks such of the able-bodied men now employed as wagoners, nurses, cooks, and other employes as are doing service for which the negroes may be found competent.

On the subject of exemptions, it is believed that abuses cannot be checked unless the system is placed on a basis entirely different from that now provided by law. The object of your legislation has been, not to confer privileges on classes, but to exempt from military duty such number of persons skilled in the various trades, professions and mechanical pursuits, as could render more valuable service to their country by laboring in their present occupation than by enlisting into the ranks of the army. The policy is unquestionable, but the result would, it is thought, be better obtained by enrolling all such persons, and allowing details to be made of the number necessary to meet the wants of the country in each occupation. Considerable numbers are believed to be now exempted from the military service who are not needful to the public in their civil vocations.

Certain duties are now performed throughout the country by details from the army which could be as well executed by persons above the present conscript age. An extension of the limit, so as to embrace persons over forty-five years, and physically fit for service, in guarding posts, railroads and bridges, in apprehending deserters, and, where practicable, assuming the place of younger men detailed for duty with the mine, ordnance, commissary and quarter master's bureaus of the War Department, would, it is hoped, add largely to the effective force in the field, without an undue burthen on the population.

If to the above measures be added a law to enlarge the policy of the act of the 21st April, 1862, so as to enable the department to replace not only enlisted cooks, but wagoners and other employes in the army by negroes, it is hoped that the ranks of the army will be so strengthened for the ensuing campaign as to put at defiance the utmost efforts of the enemy.

THE NAVY.

The advantage of retaining tried and well approved officers and of mingling recruits with experienced soldiers, is too obvious, and the policy of such a course is so clearly indicated that no other method necessary to point out the consequences which would result from the destruction of the old organizations, or to dwell upon the benefits to be secured from filling up the veteran companies as long before the discharge of the early members as may be possible.

I would also suggest the organization of an invalid corps, and that the retired officers be transferred to it. Such a corps, it is thought, could be made useful in various employments for which efficient officers and troops are now detached.

IMPRESSMENT OF SUPPLIES.

The disordered condition of the currency, to which I have already alluded, has imposed on the Government a system of supplying the wants of the army which is so unequal in its operation, vexatious to the producer, injurious to the industrial interest, and productive of such discontent among the people, as only to be justified by the existence of an absolute necessity. The report of the Secretary on this point establishes conclusively that the necessity which has forced the bureaux of supply, to provide for the army by impressment, has resulted from the impossibility of purchase by contract or in the open market, except at such rapidly increased rates as would have rendered the appropriations inadequate to the wants of the army. Indeed, it is believed that the temptation to hoard supplies for the higher prices which could be anticipated with certainty, has been checked mainly by the fear of the operation of the impressment law; and that commodities have been offered in the markets principally to escape impressment, and obtain higher prices than should be fixed by assessment. The complaints against this vicious system have been well founded, but the true cause of the evil has been misapprehended. The remedy is to be found not in a change of the impressment law, but in the restoration of the currency to such a basis as will enable the department to purchase necessary supplies in the open market, and thus render impressment a rare and exceptionable process.

MATERIALS OF WAR.

The reports from the ordnance and mining bureaux are very gratifying, and the extension of our means of supply of arms and munitions of war from our home resources has been such as to ensure our ability soon to become mainly, if not entirely, independent of supplies from foreign countries. The establishments for the rifling of guns and projectiles, for the manufacture of small arms and of gunpowder, for the supply of nitre from artificial nitre beds, and mining operations generally, have been so distributed through the country as to place our resources beyond the reach of partial disasters.

The recommendations of the Secretary of War on other points are minutely detailed in his report, which is submitted to you, and extending as they do to almost every branch of the service, merit careful consideration.

TRANS-MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT.

Regular and punctual communication with the Trans-Mississippi is so obstructed as to render difficult a compliance with much of the legislation vesting authority in the Executive branch of the Government. To supply vacancies in office; to exercise discretion on certain matters connected with the military organizations; to control the distribution of the funds collected from taxation or remitted from the Treasury; to carry on the operations of the Postoffice Department, and other like duties, require, under the constitution and existing laws, the action of the President and heads of departments. The necessities of the military service frequently forbid delay, and some legislation is required, providing for the exercise of temporary authority, until regular action can be had at the seat of Government. I would suggest, especially in the Postoffice Department, that an assistant be provided in the States beyond the Mississippi, with authority in the head of that department to vest in his assistant all such powers now exercised by the Postmaster General as may be requisite for provisional control of the funds of the department of those States, and their application to the payment of mail contractors, for supersedeas of the local post offices, and the contracts for carrying the mail; for the temporary employment of proper persons to fulfill the duties of postmasters and contractors in urgent cases, until appointments can be made, and for other like purposes. Without some legislative provision on the subject, there is great risk of the destruction of the mail service, by reason of the delays and hardships suffered by contractors under the present system, which requires constant reference to Richmond of their accounts, as well as the returns of the local commissaries, before they can receive payment for services rendered. Like provision is also necessary in the Treasury Department, while, for military affairs, it would seem to be sufficient to authorize the President and Secretary of War to delegate to the commanding general so much of the discretionary powers vested in them by law as the exigencies of the service shall require.

NAVY.

The report of the Secretary of the Navy gives in detail the operations of that department since January last, embracing information of the disposition and employment of the vessels, officers and men, and the construction of vessels at Richmond, Wilmington, Charleston, Savannah, Mobile, Selma, and on the rivers Roanoke, Neuse, Pedee, Chattahoochee and Tombigbee; the accumulation of ship timber and supplies, and the manufacture of ordnance, ordnance stores and equipments. The foundries and workshops have been greatly improved, and their capacity to supply all demands for heavy ordnance for coast and harbor defense is only limited by our deficiency in the requisite skilled labor. The want of such labor and of seamen seriously affects the operations of the department.

The skill, courage and activity of our cruisers at sea cannot be too highly commended. They have inflicted heavy losses on the enemy without suffering adequate disaster, and have seriously damaged the shipping interests of the United States by compelling their foreign commerce to seek the protection of neutral flags.

Your attention is invited to the suggestion of the report on the subjects of supplying seamen for the service, and of the provisions of the law in relation to the volunteer navy.

TERMINATION OF THE WAR.

The hope last year entertained of an early termination of the war have not been realized.

We now know that the only reliable hope for peace is in the vigor of our resistance, as the cessation of their hostility is only to be expected from the pressure of their necessities.

The patriotism of the people has proved equal to every sacrifice demanded by their country's need. We have been united as a people never were united under like circumstances before. God has blessed us with success disproportionate to our means, and, under His divine favor, our labors must at last be crowned with the reward due to men who have given all they possessed to the righteous defense of their inalienable rights, their homes and their altars.

[FROM ONE EVENING EDITION OF YESTERDAY]

The Purser of the steamship Evening Star has our thanks for polite and prompt attentions in the delivery of New York papers.

THE NEXT STEAMERS DUE FROM NEW YORK — The Yazoo is announced to leave New York for New Orleans, direct, on the 16th inst. The George Washington, direct, on the 19th, and the Columbia, via Havana, on the 19th.

The steamship Evening Star, Capt W. Robt. Bell, from New York December 15th, left her wharf on the afternoon of the 12th inst, was detained until next day 10 o'clock by fog, passed steamship George Cromwell on the 14th off Sandy Hook; bound in, left Havana Saturday at 2 o'clock P. M., and arrived here early this morning, with the following passengers:

FROM NEW YORK—S C Seldon, C I J Seldon Mr Dave J R Nelson, Mr Davis, K W Taylor, Mrs and Miss Frances, F N Brook, Mrs Reed and children, Miss Mrgas J Wellington, S Sciatin, W Reidson, Mr Trask, M G Newman, G W Gamse, H W Shannon, Mrs Nolan, Miss N Nolan, J Law, O L Cottle, C H Tyng, A Jones, J Engel, W S William, Mr Hoyes, Miss Hoyes, Miss Emily, J G Hobbs, J W Ashmead, Wm Ashmead, E Pettit, C Pettit, Mrs Pettit, C H Tyng, A A Schneider, Mr Shaw, Mr Belmer, L VanAsin, C R Aiter, J C Lane, G I Ha Ow Ord, E M Randall, M W Clark, J R Scott, J R Waterfield, J Wood, Mrs Quirke, Miss Quirke, Mrs Prentis and son, A N Austin, O W Benjamin, Chas Dalford, Mr Spark, Mr Norman, Mr Hoffman, Mr Sandere, Mr Gray, wife, servant and children, Miss Jeffer, J A Gerry, J M White, J H Ryan, Mr Maitland, J K Dalton Dr Morris and servant, Mrs Morris and servant, Mrs Ferguson, F N Dunham, D G Hyde, D Marmillion and lady, Mr Mayer and lady, Mr Lane and wife, servant and child, Chas Newman, G H Bunn, Mrs Waltzen, J Meier, A Bilsand, Mrs Wentworth, Mrs Rhinelander and 3 in steerage.

FROM HAVANA—A Dubuc, R McDowell, J Sellier, A Rocherau, J J Smith, F Avendano, J D Haina, A Clerouil, M Bernardo and lady, Mr Thoma, F N Lacrosse, M Auber, J F Johnston, Mr Smith.

Additional from the North.

ARRIVAL OF THE STEAMSHIP EVENING STAR

Sinking of the Monitor Weehawken with Thirty of her Crew.—Particulars of the Capture of the Steamer Chesapeake.—Capture of the Blockade-Runner Minna.—News from Europe.—Later from Mexico and Santa Domingo.—New York Markets.

By the arrival of the steamship Evening Star we have been placed in possession of New York papers to the 13th instant, and Havana papers as late as the 19th, most of the war news contained in the New York papers have been anticipated. We quote below the other news.

The New York *Herald* of the 12th contains the message of Jefferson Davis to the Richmond Congress in full, the most interesting extracts of which we will give in our next edition.

Latest from Mexico and Havana.

By the arrival of the Evening Star we are put in possession of our usual files of Havana papers. The dates are to the 19th instant.

FROM MEXICO.—The English mail steamer had arrived at Havana from Vera Cruz. The *Sucesdad*, published in the City of Mexico, states, in its number of the 23d of November, that, according to letters received from Monterey at the capital, D. Santiago Vidaurri, Governor and General Commanding of Nueva Leon and Coahuila, who had already ceased to recognise the authority of President Juarez, had gone over to the Imperialists, as the only means of saving the country from dismemberment by a portion of the United States. The families of Juarez and Doblado, we learn from the same source, had taken refuge in Saltillo and as they had been very kindly received by Vidaurri, the idea had occurred to the flying President and his faithful friend of removing with the cabinet, etc., to Monterey or some other point of the new owner's domains, but Vidaurri had positively declined allowing them to do so, remarking that his State was too poor to support Juarez's court. The President had finally gone to Durango, and would doubtless be compelled to leave San Luis before long.

FROM SAN DOMINGO.—By the merchant steamer Aquila, the Havana papers had dates from Santiago de Cuba to the 9th, and from San Domingo to the 3d. The news of "repeated defeats" sustained by the rebels in the lately invaded island, was fully confirmed. It had been brought by the steamer Leon, and sent by telegraph from Puerto Principe, on the 10th, to Havana. Sr. Pedillo, of Gen Gandara's column, had met and defeated the natives on the 25th at Sabana de Bues, with a loss of sixteen killed and many wounded, two prisoners, two flags, small arms, &c. Colonel Gutten, who had sallied with a column from Monte Plata, had dispersed them on the 28th, at Anton Sanches. General Santana, whose name has not been mentioned for a long time in connection with Spanish triumphs, had also routed the enemy on the 25th and on the 30th at Santa Cruz de Llamasi, and in the vicinity of Arroyo Jabita, had driven them from both positions and captured three prisoners and nineteen horses with their equipments. The loss of the rebels is not known, but we see the report of the insurgents.

The commander of the naval forces was at Aziua.

The Leon brought three hundred and twelve sick and wounded soldiers and eight officers.

Capture of the Blockade Runner Minna.

Fortress Monroe, Saturday December 12.—The steamship Circassian, Captain Eaton, from the Rio Grande on the 25th ult., has just arrived here.

On the 9th instant, when one day out from Charleston, the Circassian captured the large blockade runner Minna, with a very valuable and assorted cargo.

The Circassian towed the Minna into Hampton Roads. The captain of the latter tried to sink her but the Circassian's men got on board in time to stop it.

Last Sunday the monitor Wehawken sank near Charleston bar. Thirty three men were lost, including three engineers and one surgeon.

The Circassian experienced very heavy weather.

THE BARK EMERALD ON FIRE.

Boston, Saturday, December 12.—The bark Emerald, arrived this morning from New Orleans. She was on fire, but the flames were nearly extinguished.

The steamer Charles Pearson is alongside of her, and will tow her to her wharf.

MOVEMENTS OF MOSEBY'S AND WHITE'S GUERRILLAS.

About one hundred of Moseby's and White's guerrillas appeared in the vicinity of Lovettsville about midnight on the 8th instant. They took old Dr Shaffer from his bed, and demanded his watch and hat. They took his hat from his head and then released him. The neighborhood is full of guerrillas.

Moseby was with the gang which visited Lovettsville. His headquarters were at Markham, on the railroad in Fauquier county. Markham is west of Oak Hill, on the Manassas Railroad. These guerrillas were in full Federal uniform. They are watching our forage and transportation wagons very closely, and are ready at all times to take advantage of circumstances.

The Steamer Chesapeake Captured by the Rebels.

THE SECOND ENGINEER KILLED AND THROWN OVERBOARD—THE CAPTAIN AND CREW LANDED AT ST. JOHN.

Portland, Me., December 9.—The following dispatch has just been received from St. John, N. B.:

The steamer Chesapeake was captured twenty miles N.N.E. of Cape Cod at 1:30 A. M. on Monday by seventeen rebels, who left New York as passengers.

The second engineer was killed and thrown overboard. The chief engineer and mate were wounded.

Captain Willett and crew were landed here this morning.

[The Chesapeake is of about 400 tons burthen. Her crew consisted of some 20 men, few passengers besides the rebels. Her cargo consisted of a general assortment, such as would be found in a country grocery store. There were no large lots of provisions on board, and her captors, unless they secure other supplies, will not be able to keep body and soul together long. As she was taken possession of at 1 30 on Monday morning, it is probable that the Captain was asleep, as the most dangerous part of the voyage was passed, that between Long Island and Martha's Vineyard Sound. The chief engineer was killed, Orin Schaffer, of this city. He leaves a wife and children. The chief engineer, James Johnson, and chief mate, Charles Johnson, both of this city, were wounded.]

SECOND DISPATCH.

St. John, N. B, December 9.—The steamer Chesapeake, Captain Willett, from New York for Portland, Me, was taken possession of on Sunday morning, between one and two o'clock, by sixteen Confederate passengers.

The Second Engineer of the steamer was shot dead, and his body thrown overboard.

The First Engineer was shot in the chin, but was retained on board.

The First Mate was badly wounded in the groin.

Eleven or twelve shots were fired at the Captain.

After being overpowered the Captain was put in irons, and the passengers were notified that they were prisoners of War to the Confederate States of America.

The steamer came to, off Partridge Island, at about 1 o'clock this morning.

The crew and passengers, except the first engineer, were put on board a boat, and sent to this city.

The steamer then sailed in an easterly direction, and was subsequently seen alongside another vessel. It is supposed that she took on board a supply of coal from her.

The attack took place about twenty-one miles west of Cape Cod.

Captain Willett and the passengers per the Chesapeake are now at the Mansion House.

The steamer and cargo were valued at one hundred and eighty thousand dollars.

The steamer sailed from New York on Saturday at 5 P. M. and was on her first regular line plying between New York and Portland.

It will be recollected that it was the Chesapeake that captured Captain Reed and his party when they attempted to run away with the cut out from the harbor of Portland.

St. John, N. B., December 10.—The *Evening Globe* gives the following, connected with the capture of the Chesapeake:

The scheme was matured here by Confederate agents. Meetings were held, and the passage money of parties to make the seizure was paid through to New York. They were promised five hundred dollars each on the steamer being safely taken into Wilmington. It was also arranged that at a certain state in New York each of the parties was to call at different times for a parcel containing a revolver, ammunition and a pair of handcuffs. It is believed that the money was supplied by Confederate agents, was valuable to the South, and that it was arranged that she should be seized on this particular trip. The manager of the plot represented that the Chesapeake had been taken while attempting to run the blockade, and that was a harmless effort to get back Southern property. We have the names of five of the parties engaged in the seizure. They belong to the city and left here with Capt Willett.

The Confederate Government officially denounced "roughs." One of them was a member of the penitentiary. They all went from here by the steamer New England, on the 24, to Boston. The Chesapeake did not coal here. She called off the harbor and took on board Capt Parker, formerly of the privateer Retribution, who took command. The citizens generally regret that this city has unwillingly afforded temporary shelter to the consorters of the scheme, and that any persons from this place should be concerned in it. Public opinion condemns the action of Capt Willett and the passengers and crew were provided for by the steamer New England to-day.

THIRD DISPATCH.

Portland, December 11, 1863.—The steamer New England arrived this morning from St. John, bringing Captain Willett and a portion of the crew of the Chesapeake, all of whom, with the exception of the mate, who is badly wounded, proceeded to Boston.

Captain Willett reports having met two steamers bound east, undoubtedly in pursuit of the pirates—both side wheel steamers. He also reports that all the passengers engaged in the capture of the Chesapeake passed from St John to Boston in the steamer New England but a few days ago, and most of them were undoubtedly provincials.

Captain Willett furnishes the following copy of the order of the captain of the pirate Retribution to the officers detached to capture the Chesapeake:—

To Lieut. John Chibbon Brame

You are hereby ordered to proceed to the city of New York with the following:—First Lieut David Colins, Sailing Master George Robinson, and the crew of eleven men. You will on arrival engage pass go on board the steamer, and use your discretion as to the proper time and place to capture. Your action towards the crew and passengers will be strictly in accordance with the President's instructions. You will, as circumstances will permit, bring your prize to the Island of Grand Manan for further orders—Seal Cove harbor, if accessible.

JNO. PARKER,
Captain Privateer Retribution.

FOURTH DISPATCH.

Portland, December 12, 1863.—Collector Washburne has just received the following from Halifax:—"The Chesapeake is at St Mary's destitute of coal. Gunboats will take her if there to morrow."

Portland, Me., Saturday, December 12.—The steamer Chesapeake left Shelbourne at 12 o'clock last night after shipping some men and coaling.

An Appalling Disaster.—The Monitor Weehawken Goes Down at her Anchor in a Gale.—Loss of Four Officers and Twenty-six of her Crew.

United States Transport Fulton, Off Charleston, Dec. 8, 1863.

At two o'clock on Sunday afternoon, while a furious wind prevailed from the northwest, the iron clad Weehawken, lying at the entrance of Charleston harbor, went down at her anchorage—we were informed by a survivor—bottom side to the bottom—and carried with her, to a horrible death beneath the waves, four of her engineers and twenty six of her crew.

The above was the position of the fleet when the signal of distress was made—the iron clad Weehawken, at a few minutes before 2 o'clock. The signal was seen and answered at once by the flagship, from which four boats were dispatched to her assistance, and by the South Carolina, which sent two of her boats to the Weehawken's aid. The tugs Dandelion and Iris were also at once called up, and with them Commander Duncan, of the Weehawken, who chanced to be on the flagship, and in conversation with the Admiral when the signal was made, proceeded immediately, with the hope of running his vessel on the beach. He had scarcely left the Admiral when the officer of the deck made out from the Weehawken a new signal, and he immediately reported the fact to the Admiral.

A moment after she settled swiftly down by the head, careening slightly over to starboard, and disappeared beneath the waves.

It is impossible to convey any idea of the appalling suddenness of the event, or of the suddenness of a thunderbolt. When the first signal of distress was made no one divined how serious was the danger, and when, at length, the vessel went down, it was difficult to realize that the reality was before us, even the evidence of their own senses. The wind was now blowing with great fury, and the boats which hastened from all sides to the scene encountered great peril in picking up from the water the few who had succeeded in getting away from the Weehawken before she sank.—Although the weather was bitterly cold, some twenty or more sprang to the boats and succeeded in getting away. As many others were rescued from the surging waves by the launches of the flagship South Carolina and the tugboats Dandelion and Iris. Thirty perished.

When it was known for a certainty that the vessel was to be lost, a panic of fright and fear benumbed them, and the terror stricken crew below had little power to help themselves when they were ordered to come up deck, and the sergeant-at arms rushed frantically away to release them. Poor fellows, they all went down. There were invalids in the sick bay, and to their relief the surgeon sent his steward, who never returned. The steward was the first to force to whom valu shrieks for a helping hand at the pumps were made.

I believe that none of the officers perished save the four assistant engineers, who were overtaken by the flood before they could make any effort to escape. Commander Duncan had only taken command of the Weehawken on Saturday, having been detached from the Paul Jones to relieve Commander Calhoun. The officers of the ship, the paymaster's funds, and the papers of the ship sank with her.

The yeoman was brought alive on board the flagship, but died in spasms a few moments afterwards. Various parties were picked up and taken to the nearest vessels, where every provision was made for their comfort and restoration.

Further from Europe by the Etna.

THE PROPOSED CONGRESS.

The *Daily News* confirms the statement of the *Morning Post*, that England will not accede to the proposed Congress. It understands that the French Government will shortly receive a clear statement of the grounds on which the English Government feels compelled to decline to accept the Congress.

Les Francais says that all the Continental Powers had acceded in principle to the Congress except Austria, which Government had not made known its decision. The reply of Russia had been received. It is said to be courteous and conciliatory, but asks for information as to the objects to be discussed.

The Schleswig-Holstein Dispute.

The agitation in Germany in regard to the claim of the Prince of Augustenburg to the Dukedom of Holstein appears to be on the increase.

Austria and Prussia are said to have raised objections to the claims of the Prince.

Meetings in favor of the Prince's claims were being held in Hamburg, Frankfort, Leipsic, Hanover, &c., almost daily, and the formation of volunteer corps was openly advocated.

It is said the Prussian Government had agreed to send troops into Holstein immediately, while the troops of the German Powers will place a supporting army corps in motion at once.

The London *Times* admits the possibility of a successful insurrection in Holstein, but it calls on the Great Powers to demand that there shall be no Prussian or Federal invasion.

Very Latest by Telegraph to Queenstown.

Liverpool, November 26th.—The *Times* says the British Cabinet gave the most serious attention to the proposed Congress, but with the greatest respect for the Emperor of the French, resolved on courteously declining.

The *Times* believes that other governments will follow England's example.

The Holstein question creates a continued uneasiness. It is rumored that Russia desires to intervene.

New York Markets.

The New York *Commercial Advertiser* of the evening of the 19th has the following:

There were large sales of gold this week, both at the exchange and the board—those at the latter amounting to $734,000. The extremes of the week were 168¾@169½. This morning the market opened at 169¾@170, and after advancing to 170⅛, the price fell at 1 o'clock to 169¾@169. The City of New York to-day takes out $1,107,573 48, and the Sacramento about $170,000. Foreign exchange is inactive, and the rates were nominal at 164½@165.

The prices of gold at the board each day of the week were as follows:

	First Board.	Second.
Monday, Dec. 7	164¼@165¼	151 @ 165
Tuesday, " 8	168¾@169	169¼@169¾
Wednesday, Dec. 9	168¾@169	169¼@169¾
Thursday, " 10	168¾@169¼	169¼@169¾
Friday, " 11	164¼@165	164¼@165¼
Saturday, " 12	164¼@165¼	164¼@165¼

The Times of the 13th says:

Saturday, December 12—P. M.—The price of gold varied through the day about ½ @ ¾ cent in the last hour of yesterday, closing at 164¾@165 at 1 P. M. The shipments to Europe by this day's steamers were $1,19,000, making for the whole week $1,109,455.

Cotton was more active and dearer.

MONETARY AND FINANCIAL.

SEE OFFICE,
TUESDAY EVENING, Dec. 22, 1863.

We have but few changes to notice in the market to-day. The accounts by the Evening Star from New York, which appear in our news columns, seem to have had little or no influence. Our leading staple continues firm. There is in fact very little offering at the ruling rates, holders standing aloof in the hope of an improvement, predicated mainly on the prospect of a material falling off in the receipts. With but little movement in cotton there is but less Exchange offering, which consequently continues quiet but firm. Specie is in good request, and as will be seen from the details below, comes freely out.

In Specie Exchange we noticed some sales of 30 days' sight on New York, rates not reported. Sterling bills,