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The Kent News.

CHESTERTOWN:

SATURDAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 14, 1863.

THE NEWS OF THE WEEK.

At last we have correct information from Charleston, and are forced to bow in humble admiration of the Rebel powers of exaggeration. Never did a juvenile blow a soap bubble to more extended proportions, compared with the paucity of material, than the Rebels expanded their account of the sinking, burning and dispersal of our blockaders, out of facts of the flimsiest and most unsubstantial proportions. The Rebels sunk none of our vessels, neither did they burn, nor did they disperse the fleet, and consequently the blockade was not raised. The attack by the rebel rams is supposed to have been made for the purpose of recapturing the British steamer Princes Royal, which had been captured by our fleet, but in this they failed. The gunboat Mercedita was damaged, and the steamer Keystone State disabled, but both had reached Port Royal. The Federal loss in the fight is stated at twenty-four killed and fifteen wounded. Nothing is said of the rumored movements against Charleston. The official dispatches say nothing of the Rebel claim to have dispersed the fleet and raised the blockade, Admiral Dupont probably never having imagined that such a preposterous exaggeration would have been put forth by the rebels.

Vicksburg despatches describe the running of the blockade at that point by the ram Queen of the West. She started on her perilous voyage at five on the morning of the 3d, and though a hot fire from the enemy's heavy guns was poured upon her and she delayed to butt a Rebel steamer which lay under the bank, and was hit twelve times, nobody on board was hurt. Other rams, it is stated, will soon follow, and troops will be landed south of Vicksburg, and the communication of the city with Louisiana be thus cut off. The Rebel transports in the Ouachita and Red rivers will also be attacked.

The additional details we get of the operations of the steam ram Queen of the West show the affair to have been a brilliant and most successful one. Col. Ellet, who commands the ram, states that in runing past Vicksburg he attacked a Rebel steamer lying in front of the city and set fire to her with incendiary shells, but the Rebels succeeded in extinguishing the flames. The cotton barricades of his own boat taking fire from the Rebel shells, Col. Ellet was forced to desist from this attack and continue on past the batteries, which he ran without receiving any serious damage. After passing Vicksburg the Queen of the West ran down the Mississippi until she came near enough to Port Hudson to draw the fire from the Rebel batteries. On her way down the river she encountered three Rebel steamers, all loaded with provisions for the Rebel army, and succeeded in sinking the whole three, and took fifty-six prisoners, including one Colonel. The result of this trip is most important, and will no doubt result in giving us control of the Mississippi between Vicksburg and Port Hudson.

The recent battle at Fort Donelson was a small but brilliant affair for the Union arms. The Rebels had four thousand men and eight pieces of artillery. They charged the fortifications several times but were repulsed with great loss. They lost over one hundred in killed and three hundred prisoners. Among the wounded was their commander, General Forrest.

Gen. Rosecrans has issued the following order: "By virtue of the authority delegated to the Major General Commanding by the Secretary of War, Second Lieut. L. H. Albert, company G, Thirty-ninth Indiana volunteers, is, for desertion, dishonorably dismissed the service of the United States. The General commanding deems him too worthless to have him arrested and brought back for trial."

An order was issued on the 7th instant, consolidating the army of the Potomac under one command. To the first corps is assigned Major-Gen. J. F. Reynolds; to the second, Major-Gen. D. N. Couch; the third Brigadier Gen. D. E. Sickles; the fifth Major General Geo. G. Meade; the sixth Major General John Sedgwick; the eleventh Major General Franz Sigel; twelfth Major General George W. Slocum. The cavalry of the army will be consolidated into one corps, under the command of Brigadier General Stoneman, who will make the necessary assignments for detachment duty.

WHITE SLAVERY IN THE SOUTH.

King Jeff rules his white slaves with a rod of iron. They have a law that every man between eighteen and forty-five years of age shall go into the army, but some of the Southern people, imagining that they had the same independence and freedom that they always enjoyed under the Government of the United States, opposed the law upon the ground that it was unconstitutional, and an infringement of the rights of the States. King Jeff, however, soon dispelled this notion, and armed bands of cavalry are everywhere enforcing the law, and driving the Southern white men into the army at the point of the bayonet.

The truth is, and we are sorry that it is so, that the Southern people are this day as firmly held in the bonds of slavery as the negroes on their plantations. They must not speak against the acts of their Government—they dare not refuse the Confederate money, nor are they even allowed to express any opinion favorable to a reconstruction of the Union. If they do any these things, they are at once thrust into prisons, and to make the matter still worse and more humiliating, some of their best citizens have been thrown into the negro jails.

It is this state of things that has prompted the French Emperor to cast his eyes towards the South with a longing desire. He is well informed of what is going on there, and the slavish submission of the people to the will of their despotic rulers, and he hopes to profit by it. His Mexican expedition is but the stepping-stone to this, and we should not be surprised to find him yet the Master of the Southern people. We fancy even now that we hear some of our Maryland Secessionists speaking of "my Master Louis Napoleon!" for to this complexion we honestly believe it will come, if the authority of this Government is not restored.

We append one among the many accounts we have of the enforcement of the draft in the South. We find the following in the Nashville Union:

"The doughty Forrest, in his recent visit to Franklin, the county seat of Williamson, had a lively time in enforcing the conscription law. On arriving there with his cavalry he selected a spot, placed guards around it, and ordered all the male citizens in the town to repair thither without a moment's delay. The citizens obeyed and hurried to the rendezvous.—Forrest ordered all who were within the limits of the conscription law—except those who owned twenty negroes—to come along with him as soldiers in the Confederate army, and threatened to blow every traitor to the devil who hesitated one moment. One of the unfortunate gentlemen thus summarily mustered into service, the Clerk of the Court, named Robinson, approached Forest and asked to be allowed to go to his room for a few minutes to make some necessary arrangements for this unexpected campaign. Forrest replied by drawing his pistel, and clubbing it, beat the poor fellow several times over the head, gashing it frightfully. After this exhibition of chivalry the crowd walked off after Forrest, as meekly as the negro gangs which he used to lead to action when he plied his vocation as slavetrader at Memphis."

THE NEGRO QUESTION.

Who is Responsible for its Present Position?

The Secession men—"peace men," or Breckinridge Democracy of Maryland, are so intent upon finding fault with every thing done by the U. S. Government, that all the misdoings and outrages of the conspirators who inaugurated this infamous rebellion pass unheeded. Like their allies, the abolitionists, they seem to regard the negro as paramount, and appear only alive to that question, in utter disregard of every thing like patriotism, or the welfare of the Republic. The question of *negro soldiers* is the present hobby of both secessionists and abolitionists, and whilst we, in common with conservative men everywhere, have warmly opposed this measure, we think Secessionists have no right to utter a word against it, as they are mainly responsible for it. The southern men commenced this war without justification, and *they were the first to introduce negroes into military employment!!* No man can doubt this, for we have more than once seen advertisements in the Richmond and Charleston papers calling upon the owners of slaves to send 2500 and 3000 negroes to work in the entrenchments, and this long before Congress had authorized the employment of blacks in the army. We admit that our Government should not have followed the bad example of the rebels, and we have a right to complain of it—but Rebel sympathisers and presses who have brought this about have no just cause for murmuring.—Again, in the very outset of this rebellion, and before the Rebels left Montgomery for Richmond, one of their first acts was to repudiate all debts due to Northern people, as well as to confiscate the property which Northern men held in the Southern States, thus in effect actually inviting retaliation from the North, the spirit of which is now being developed in these miserable negro measures.

The South was warned over and over again of the evils to slavery which would follow secession, but the madness and ambition of their rulers could not be controlled. One of the leading and most sensible men of South Carolina, shadowed forth the effects to result from the scheme of secession. We allude to the speech of Mr. BOYCE, member of Congress from that State. After giving his reasons at length against Secession, Mr. Boyce says:

"I object, in as strong terms as I can, to the secession of South Carolina. *Such is the intensity of my conviction upon the subject, that if Secession should take place—of which I have no idea—for I cannot believe in the existence of such a stupendous madness—I shall consider the institution of slavery as doomed, and that the Great God, in our blindness, has made us the instrument of its destruction.*"

Are not these significant words, considered in the light of to-day?—has not slavery been 'slain in the house of its friends?'

Another distinguished gentleman, in speaking of the results of Secession upon the slave question, and who is responsible for the inroads made upon it, says:

"To whom, at last, are we most plainly indebted for this inroad upon Slavery? *Who uncovered it to the assault?* With a vote in the loyal States of "fifteen hundred thousand," with the Supreme Court of the United States and both Houses of Congress on their side, and within their absolute control, and with the present Federal Executive at their mercy, who deserted their posts, *ran away*, and, in the expressive language of Cardinal Woolsey, when we apply it to Slavery,

'Left it naked to its enemies?'

And now, is there a man in Maryland—we care not who he may be, how high or how low in position—who is yet acting and sympathizing with these *betrayers of slavery*, we say to him that in no sense are the friends of the Union here responsible for the fatal stab the institution has received, but that Secession is. And now the latter come whining to proclaim their woes."

THE "TRANSCRIPT" ONCE MORE.

The *Transcript* replies at length to our strictures on the editor of that paper for suppressing facts in announcing the arrest of one "James Tilghman," concerned in burning a vessel called the "Hard Times," in Corsica creek. The editor introduces various matters foreign to the subject in controversy, among which he cites the case of a man in New Jersey, where a justice of the peace ordered the arrest of some soldiers who had taken up a man supposed to be a deserter, but who declared that he was only a three months' volunteer, and had been honorably discharged! The recent elections, and what the Secessionists in Maryland are *going to do* next fall, is also made the subject of boast.—He winds up by propounding a number of interrogatories equally irrelevant to the subject under discussion, an elaborate answer to all of which would fill several columns of our paper.

The reason for all this is plainly to be seen. It is quite natural, and, we believe, customary too, in controversy, for an individual to endeavor to "change the subject" when he gets worsted or becomes confounded in the one under discussion; consequently we will regard this as a harmless, if not a justifiable digression. We, however, prefer finishing one job before undertaking another; and when we have done with this boat-burning business, concerning which we have something further to say, will pay our respects to the editor on the subject of the "November elections," and may take occasion hereafter to reply to his interrogatories in regard to the writ of *habeas corpus*, arrests, etc. But the original subject is becoming too interesting to allow ourselves to be diverted from it at present, however tempting the bait!

We will now say, however, as seeming to demand *immediate* attention, and in reply to the editor's fourth interrogatory, that we have never heard any "loyal friend" of ours threaten to "pitch" the *Transcript's* "type in the river," and such a proceeding could never receive any countenance from us. We are law-abiding citizens, and cannot connive at even so "good a joke" (this is what the Queen Anne's Secessionists call it) as the attempt at midnight to burn up five men in a boat. If an act so rash should, however, be committed, and we desired "our friend" to escape the heavier punishment, we should feel *rather* inclined to favor his arrest "by a boat load of Federal soldiers from the city of Baltimore and his *unlimited* confinement in Fort McHenry," than that "he should be proceeded against by the legally constituted authorities * of the State of Maryland for the body of Kent county." But the reader will pardon this innocent digression—the *Transcript* is responsible for it. And now to the boat-burning!

The editor endeavors to justify his statement by saying that it "was simply given as a *report*," and that he does not even "now *know* the cause of Mr. Tilghman's arrest." Strange! *very* strange, indeed! And stranger still that a "report, the truth of which he *by no means* felt satisfied of," should have been accompanied with so many particulars! The Baltimore and Centreville papers, and nearly all other papers, have published the fact of Tilghman's arrest and confinement in Fort McHenry, *for participation in burning the "Hard Times,"* and further, that the proof of his guilt is "clear and positive."

* The editor of the *Transcript* is the prosecuting attorney for Kent county, and Judge Carmichael is ——— *the Judge!* A prisoner before them for such an offence would see "*hard times*" indeed!!

But there are some things which people find it convenient *not* to "know," and his ignorance of the facts in this case may be accounted for on that ground; for it would have spoiled his story, and destroyed its *designed* effect, to have known *and stated* the cause of the arrest. There is an old adage to the effect that "a poor excuse is better than none," but in this instance the excuse is *so* poor that it is really *worse* than none! Wonder if the editor *knows* whether the man in New Jersey, upon whose case he seems to lay so much stress, was really a three months' volunteer, or a deserter? This is a *very* important matter, and we shall look for an answer with no little interest.

But then we are informed that the parties engaged in burning the vessel should have been arrested by the "*civil* authorities" and brought to trial in Queen Ann's. The editor does not seem to understand the distinction between an offence against the National, and one against the State law. The vessel had been captured while engaged in the contraband trade (for the captain admitted it), was guarded by persons in the employ of the United States, and belonged in fact to the Government. Consequently the offence was committed against the national law, and the District Court of the United States for the District of Maryland, sitting at Baltimore, is the proper tribunal to take cognizance of it. Our reading of the law has not been very extended, but unless its teachings are contrary to sound logic, there can be no doubt on this point. We suggest to the editor that he examine his law books again, and see if he has not made a slight mistake. We not only approve of Tilghman's arrest, but the *manner* of it, and would rejoice to learn that *every other individual* engaged in that dirty act had been brought to justice in precisely the same way, notwithstanding we are told that it was "just as much *an offence* against the laws of our State, aye, and against the laws of the United States, as the burning of the vessel 'Hard Times.'"

In regard to "the verdict which will be pronounced in this State and County at the next November elections," we will have more to say hereafter. We will remark, however, that this is the old locofoco (now secession) song—they are always successful *before* an election! They were never more sanguine of success than in the last campaign in Maryland, when they were beaten *thirty-two thousand* in the State, and *four hundred and thirty-two* in Kent county! But what is now your platform? Still "Union men, opposed to coercion?" or "Southern men, in favor of peaceable Seccession?" You cannot claim kindred with the Democrats in any of the States where recent elections have been held—not even in Delaware—for they all distinctly favored the prosecution of the war *for* the restoration of the Union, and to establish the supremacy of the Constitution and the laws over the seceded States—and in this respect their principles are identical with those of the Union men of Maryland. We ask again—what is your platform of *political* principles? *We* stand squarely upon the Crittenden resolution of '61, as the best and most expeditious mode of suppressing the rebellion, and condemn all unnecessary departures therefrom as unwise, and calculated to prolong, rather than shorten the controversy. If, however, the policy therein indicated should be found, on fair trial, to be inadequate for the purpose, we would use such other means as might be found effectual for the accomplishment of the task. Whatever is necessary, but nothing beyond that, is the measure of our loyalty. "We are for the Union *still*," and would prefer to live the remainder of our days on bread and water, and be content with sufficient covering to barely cover our nakedness, rather than that the most wicked conspiracy the world has ever known, set on foot by Jeff Davis and other traitors to destroy the best Government under heaven, should be successful. We owe it to ourselves, and especially to our posterity, and as a debt of gratitude to our forefathers who bequeathed to us our inheritance, to crush out this accursed rebellion, and that forever!

We have been watching the maneuvering of the Secessionists in their efforts to make political capital for the fall campaign, and feel strongly inclined to the opinion that they would be almost willing to advocate the restoration of the Union, and the prosecution of the war for the attainment of that object, if by so doing they could feel certain of success at the "November elections." To wheel into line with the Northern democracy, and become Union men instead of Secessionists, would, in their estimation, be but a *slight* modification of their former *principles*, so that they might thereby but carry an election!

GENERAL BURNSIDE.—Gen. Burnside, with unexampled magnanimity, offers to resume command of his old army corps, and fight under Hooker. He positively asserts that he will not remain in the service without a command, holding it to be the duty of every man holding a commission to give his time and energies to the cause of the Government.

THE NEGRO SOLDIER BILL.

The following is the negro soldier bill which recently passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 83 to 55. The whole Maryland delegation voted against it—(Mr. Calvert was absent when the vote was taken, but subsequently obtained permission to record his vote in the negative.) We desire to have this record fairly understood. Already the rebels and traitors in our State are endeavoring to make capital out of this *administration* measure, and are trying to make it appear that the Union party of Maryland is favorable to the measure, that they, corrupt and politically rotten as they are, may place themselves in power. *Remember, therefore, that Messrs. Crisfield, Webster* (a Colonel in the army), *Leary, Thomas and Calvert voted against the negro soldier bill.*

Be it enacted, &c., That the President be and he is hereby authorized to enroll, arm, equip and receive into the land and naval service of the United States such number of volunteers, of African descent, as he may deem useful to suppress the present rebellion, for such term of service as he may prescribe not exceeding five years; the said volunteers to be organized according to the regulations of the branch service in which they may be enlisted, to receive the same rations, clothing and equipments as other volunteers, and a monthly pay not to exceed that of the volunteers; to be officered by white or black persons appointed and commissioned by the President, and to be governed by the rules and articles of war, and such other rules and regulations as may be prescribed by the President.

Provided, That nothing herein contained, or in the rules and articles of war, shall be so construed as to authorize or permit any officer of African descent to be appointed to rank or exercise military or naval authority over white officers, soldiers or men in the military or naval service of the United States. Nor shall any greater pay than $10 per month, with the usual allowance of clothing and rations, be allowed and paid to privates or laborers of African descent which are or may be in the military or naval service of the United States. Provided further that the slaves of loyal citizens in the States exempt by the President's proclamation of January 1, 1863, shall not be received into the armed service of the United States nor shall there be recruiting offices opened in either of the States of Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee or Missouri, without the consent of the Governors of the said States having been first obtained.

WE clip the following interesting dialogue from a Delaware paper. We commend it the editor of the *Transcript*, as showing how the "myrmidons of Republican despotism over-rid the sanctity of the ballot" in that State last fall:

The Legislature Committee are engaged in taking evidence in relation to the introduction of United States troops at the polls at the last General Election. An amusing incident in this connection took place a few days ago. A prominent Democrat from Sussex was summoned to give evidence in the matter, when the following interrogatories were propounded and elicited the responses given:—

Question.—Where do you reside?

Answer.—In N. W. Fork Hundred, Sussex county.

Question.—Where there United States soldiers at the polls in your Hundred, on the day of the last State election?

Answer—Yes.

Question—Was any voter deterred from casting his vote by the presence of said military force?

Answer—Yes.

Question—How many?

Answer—One.

Question—What was his political sentiments?

Answer—He was a Union man.

A member of the Committee.—That will answer Mr.———, you can go.

STAMPS USED IN OFFICE OF REGISTER OF WILLS.—Probates of Wills and Letters of Administration according to amount of estates—under $2 500, 50 cents; $2,500 to $5,000, $1; $5,000 to $20,000, $2. Letters Testamentary, Order to Advertise for Creditors, Warrant to Appraisers, and all office copies, 10 cent stamps. Executors, Administrators and Guardian Bonds, 50 cents. Indentures of Apprentices, 5 cents. Appraisements, for each sheet, 5 cents. Petitions to Orphans' Court original price, 50 cents.

CAPTURE OF CANNON.—The Centreville (Md.) State Rights states that on the 2d inst "a cavalry company from Baltimore came over, made an expedition to Kent Island, and captured several small cannon belonging to Mr. W. B. Paca, at Queenstown." Mr. Paca has always been an uncompromising Union man, and it is reported here that his cannon were taken by the U. S. cavalry at his own request, he fearing that the secessionists might steal them away!

A VOICE FROM NORTH CAROLINA—PLAIN TALK.—The Raleigh Standard, in speaking of the rebel authorities at Richmond, holds the following language:

"They labored to break down the old government because they were about to loose the beef, and they would wreck the new one before they would part with the carcass upon which the vultures are settled. Their motto was 'divide and destroy,' and their motto now is 'consolidated rule or ruin.' Hence they are the destructives, and those who oppose them are the conservatives. We still walk the soil and breathe the air of freedom, and are not to be influenced in our course by the blandishments or the frowns of power."

The French Emperor's Last Proposition.

The New York Times commenting on the late news from Europe, giving the rumors of a proposition from the Emperor Napoleon for the North and the South to send delegates to a convention, says:

As military operations are not to cease pending the proposed convention, we can see no harm from commissioners from North and South meeting in Montreal or Mexico, and discussing the whole subject in the light of the existing situation.

The New York Tribune remarks:

As the rumor comes from several independent sources, it is probably not without foundation. If true, it is in effect only a proposition to billigerents to settle their controversy by a Congress of their own. If rejected, or accepted and followed by no settlement, there is still left to the Emperor the alternative of offering his own friendly offices. In either case that will probably be the next step, unless our government shall seize this occasion to assure the Emperor that no offer of mediation whatever will be acceptable.

The Journal of Commerce says:

The practical working of such a commission might be a matter of doubt. It could not be clothed with any powers, while it might have the way to more conclusive, because more constitutional counsels. The idea is freed from the objections which attach to all plans of mediation, and possesses the good feature of leaving to Americans the settlement of their own quarrels, and of recommending them to try talking as well as fighting.

Gen. Foster's Expedition.

A Newbern correspondent of the Boston Traveller, who has just returned fron Beaufort, writes, under date of the 31st ultimo, as follows:

The sailing of the expedition, for, I believe, Charleston harbor, was one of the grandest sights I ever witnessed. The fleet consisted of steamers, transports, tugs and schooners.

At about 11 o'clock on the 30th of Jan. the sails of the various smaller craft were unloosened, and, silently, one by one, in close order, they glided from the harbor. Next followed in the same rapid succession the steamers, storeships, transports, tugs and all. It was a magnificent sight—one long line of vessels, crowded with troops cheering The bands were playing and the colors streaming from the masts.

The New York Times announces the arrival of the fleet at Port Royal, S. S., and adds:

The first vessels of the fleet reached the latter place on the morning of the 31st ult., and the rest of the steamers followed in the course of the day. The sailing vessels had also mostly arrived at the date of our latest advices—the 3rd inst. Gen. Foster was in conference with Gen. Hunter and measures were being rapidly pefrected to carry out the object of the expedition—which everybody now supposes is the capture of Charleston.

A Washington correspondent of the Balt. Sun, under date of Feb. 10, says:

On Saturday morning, as a body of about two hundred convalescent soldiers were being marched from the railroad station to camp in Virginia, they attacked every colored person who fell in their way along Maryland avenue. As they proceeded their violence increased, until they arrived near the Long Bridge, when they got stones from the street, and threw them at every colord person in sight, some of whom were struck, and quite a number of windows were broken. About eight o'clock yesterday morning a freight wagon containing a couple of colored men was fiercely assailed by a squad of soldiers on their way to the Seventh street wharf, with stones and other missiles. The assailed persons gave no provocation whatever, and the whole proceeding seemed to arise from the ill-feeling of the soldiers to the negroes as a class.

SAD AND FATAL ACCIDENT.—Perhaps the saddest accident that has happened in our county for some time, occurred on Saturday last, at Vienna, by which we lose one of our most respected and valuable citizens. It appears that on the above named day, Mr. Richard H. Jackson, who was in company with some two or three others, among whom was Mr. Wm. A. Sherman, was carelessly handling a loaded pistol, when some one striking his arm, the pistol went off, the ball entering the left side of Mr. Sherman's neck and lodging in the spine. Mr. S. lingered until Monday, when death relieved him of his sufferings. This sad event has cast a deep gloom upon the neighborhood, as Mr. Sherman was a gentleman very much beliked. He has left behind him a family and a large circle of friends and acquaintances to mourn their loss. He was about 45 years of age.—*Cambridge Dem.*

HON. J. J. CRITTENDEN has written a letter to Gov. Robinson, of Kentucky, counselling moderation. He says: "Fight the proclamation with resolutions, and the Rebels with bayonets."—*Exchange.*

Such counsel was worthy of the venerable statesman of Kentucky, but we are sure that Gov. Robinson did not need it. We will fight the proclamation with resolutions and in every other constitutional way, but we shall not, in fighting it, go outside of the Constitution for weapons or do anything to weaken the righteous warfare waged for the suppression of the rebellion.—*Nashville Union.*

THE NEGRO REGIMENTS BILL.—The committee will not report the House bill to raise 150,000 negroes for the army. Mr. Wilson, the chairman, and nearly every member of the committee, consider its provisions impracticable and conflicting. Mr. Wilson may possibly propose an entirely new bill as a substitute.—*Wash. Cor. N. Y. Times.*

FIRE.—On the 2d inst. the dwelling in Queenstown, Queen Anne's county, Md., occupied by Mr. Alexander Maxwell as a hotel, caught fire and was consumed.