

The Western Democrat.

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W. J. YATES, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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THE NEW HOME GUARD LAW. An Act to Increase the Efficiency of the Home Guard Organization.

Sec. 1. Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, That whenever the Guard for Home Defence shall be called into service beyond the limits of their respective counties, the Governor may cause two or more companies to be consolidated into one company so as to make not less than sixty-four men, rank and file, to each company; said company so consolidated shall elect from the Captains commanding the companies so consolidated a Captain to command such consolidated company, and from the first Lieutenants, Second Lieutenants and Junior Second Lieutenants of such companies, an officer of each said rank; to be assigned to duty with such consolidated company, such officers of companies so consolidated as may not be elected for service with such consolidated company, shall be required to perform service as non-commissioned officers or privates in the consolidated company, formed of their original companies, and while so serving the commissions shall be suspended.

Sec. 2. Be it further enacted, That the Governor may in like manner cause two or more battalions or regiments of the Home Guards when called into service beyond their respective battalions or regiments, to be consolidated into one battalion or regiment, to be commanded by one officer of each such rank, and while so serving the commissions shall be suspended. The Governor shall have power to discriminate in favor of farmers and mechanics, when he calls out a less number than the whole of a company, also to declare vacant the office of an officer who is declared by a medical board permanently disabled for field duty, either in the militia or Home Guards, or of an officer who absconds to the enemy.

Sec. 3. Be it further enacted, That all Quartermasters and Commissaries of regiments or battalions of Home Guards as at present organized, that may not be assigned to duty by the Governor with a consolidated battalion or regiment, shall be required to serve as non-commissioned officers or privates, in some company of their present command, and while so serving their commissions shall be suspended. The Governor shall have power to discriminate in favor of farmers and mechanics, when he calls out a less number than the whole of a company, also to declare vacant the office of an officer who is declared by a medical board permanently disabled for field duty, either in the militia or Home Guards, or of an officer who absconds to the enemy.

The Western Democrat. CHARLOTTE, N. C.

RETURN OF OUR COMMISSIONERS.—The Commissioners sent by President Davis to consult the authorities of the United States on the subject of peace, returned to Richmond on Saturday night the 4th. They were not permitted to go to Washington, nor to land from the steamer at Fortress Monroe, but they were met in the boat off Fortress Monroe by Lincoln and Seward, and were told that the only terms upon which they could get peace was unconditional submission to the Government and laws of the United States. Our Commissioners have published a statement concerning the interview, which will be found in another column.

The laws of the yankee Congress have abolished slavery and confiscated all our property, and to these laws we are told we must submit if we want peace. With the southern people it is either abject submission or war until their independence is achieved. Since the return of our commissioners, large meetings have been held in Richmond, in the army and elsewhere, and resolutions adopted to prosecute the war for liberty at all hazards. The meeting at Richmond was held in pursuance of a call by the Governor of Virginia, and was addressed by President Davis, who declared that under no circumstances would he submit to the enemy. The following is one of the resolutions adopted: "Resolved, That in this presence, and in the face of the world, reverently invoking the aid of Almighty God, we renew our resolve to maintain our liberty and independence, and to this end mutually pledge our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

VICE PRESIDENT STEPHENS.—A dispatch from Richmond states that the Hon. A. H. Stephens will soon return to Georgia to canvass that State for a vigorous prosecution of the war. He says, since his return from the conference with Lincoln and Seward, that the only hope now left for the South is in the strong arms and stout hearts of her people. Lincoln's refusal to make peace on any other terms than the unconditional surrender of the southern people, will open the eyes of others besides Mr Stephens.

RAILROADS. From the Raleigh Confederate.

There is a universal voice of condemnation because of the reckless bad management of these corporations. If bad Quartermasters, Commissaries, Enrolling officers and the scattered subordinates throughout the land, have brought, in many cases, ruin upon the government, and by evil conduct put in peril the success of the cause; if deserters have abandoned the ranks to become a prey upon their home people, they are not the only or the worst foes to the revolution, that the Confederacy has produced. Railroad corporations, which ought to have been the especial friends of the government, those fostered and favored corporations which have been allowed extraordinary immunity, in keeping their friends and favorites out of the service. Yet this is far from being the case; most of them have out "Herod Herod" in their sordid grasping and extortionate greed for money making. It has been common for them to hold at the disposal of speculators their running stock, not unfrequently to the delay of government freight, and in some instances to the detention of troops, passing from one point to the defence of another point of the country. This accommodation has been carried to such an extent, that the public eye has been offended, by the open preference given to speculators, not for the transmission of luxuries only, but when they were engaged in buying up the necessities of life, in localities where they were scarce, to be transmitted to other places for exorbitant gain. The officers of railroad corporations, who connive at these abominable practices, are no better friends to the Confederacy than Sherman or Grant, and if we fail, the downfall of our people may be laid, in no small degree, to their charge.

Besides this criminal misconduct, the gross neglect, mismanagement and carelessness—and the utter disregard of the comfort of travellers is matter of universal complaint. If any one wishes to pass through just that amount of torture that is insupportable, let him take a trip on the North Carolina Railroad, towards Greensboro', and, thence, over the Piedmont to Danville. Great allowance is to be made for the times, and the difficulties of keeping up the condition of roads. But neither the times nor the condition of roads excuse a total abandonment of order, method, neatness, regularity and comfort. When an engine comes from Goldsboro' towards Raleigh, broken down, and these starts for Greensboro, there is neither reason or sense in the endeavor to force it through at the hazard of life to all aboard; certainly to the prolongation of their travel, when engines are standing, in better plight at Company Shops, and there are telegraph stations along the route. A few nights ago, we had occasion to witness such an operation. The train was long and full; many soldiers returning to their commands. The engine on leaving Raleigh was completely broken down, so that the speed attained averaged about two miles per hour. It was easy to telegraph from Raleigh so as to have a good engine to meet the train at Durham's. Yet this simple act of justice, to a heavily taxed traveling public, was wholly ignored, and we were compelled to fret and worry along through the cold bitter night consuming twenty-four hours in reaching Greensboro, the better engine only reaching us near Haw river? As for cleanliness or comfort, they are gone out of date—out of recollection—and if any unfortunate passenger should desire to obtain information, and apply to the conductor, he might as well attack a bull dog. But if this is the condition of things on the North Carolina Road, when we come to speak of the Piedmont, ah, our pen refuses the task. There they run by telegraph, and the result is, that between Greensboro and Danville, one is engaged from ten to fifteen hours in "waiting for orders." If he is fortunate enough to get orders to move on, he may if he can keep the track, succeed in getting through in a week or ten days.

God save the country, if its destiny, in any way, depends on proper and conscientious performance of duty by railroad corporations. [A committee has been appointed by the Legislature to investigate the conduct of Railroad companies in this State.]

A correspondent of the Columbus Enquirer states that the rebel cruiser Sea King, now the Shenandoah, whose deeds seem about to equal those of the old Sumter, is commanded by Lieut. James Iredell Waddell, of North Carolina. Lieut. Waddell, at the beginning of this revolution, was an officer of the United States navy and absent on a three years' cruise in the Mediterranean. During the first part of the second year of the war, his ship, the Vandalia, we believe, returned to the United States, and Lieut. Waddell resigned. He was closely watched by the Federal authorities, but managed to escape finally by swimming the Potomac river during a dark and stormy night. It did not seem proper to the authorities at Richmond to increase his rank, but no higher tribute could have been paid to his qualities as an officer, than his selection, among so many of higher grade, for such an important command as the one he holds at present.

A SAMPLE OF SAVANNAH RULE.—We find in the New York Commercial the following paragraph, which will show how delightful the Yankee rule in Savannah is becoming: "A Savannah belle stepped off the sidewalk the other day to avoid walking under the American flag, which hung in front of an officer's headquarters. General Geary, military commandant of the city, immediately gave orders to have her promenade back and forth under the hateful symbol for an hour, as a warning for similar offenders."

The negro women and children who have left their masters were huddled together in a pen outside the town of Savannah, in want of both clothing and food, and suffering from cold and exposure. The soldiers appear to have little if any sympathy with them, and tell them they would be better off if they would return where they come from. Such is the report of refugees from Savannah, in regard to Yankee treatment of the deluded wretches who left their comfortable homes and followed the Yankee army to the coast; and such will be the fate of all who imitate their example.

THE MARCH INTO TENNESSEE. The Rev. Dr. J. B. McFerrin, of the Methodist Church, who was with Gen. Hood's army in the late Tennessee campaign, writes to the Southern Christian Advocate as follows:

The campaign into Tennessee was the most fatiguing and exhausting I have ever witnessed. Long marches, rain, snow, sleet, ice, mud, frozen ground, high waters, severe fighting, and many of the soldiers without shoes and blankets made the whole march one which nobody wishes to see repeated. And then what was worse than all, we met sorrows, disasters, and were compelled to retreat from a portion of the country which I consider the most loyal, taken altogether, that I have seen in the Southern Confederacy. To me, the retreat was a sad affair. Having been from home nearly three years, and having been separated from my beloved family for more than twelve months, I would gladly have remained with my army in possession of a land, the hearts of whose people are with the South. But God ordered or permitted it to be otherwise. I saw my dear wife, but none of my children; and my beloved James was captured or killed. A good Christian son, may God protect him and permit us to meet again. To turn back under these circumstances, was sad indeed; but then, as a faithful and obedient son, I must say, "Father, thy will be done!"

The campaign was a failure, a disaster, but not half so great as has been represented by rumors and exaggerated reports. As General Hood—a good man and brave soldier—said to me: God saw that we were not ready, not sufficiently humbled as yet to receive the "blessings of peace and independence. I could write much to you of the condition of things in Tennessee, both as it regards the country and the Church, but I forbear. The suit in the Federal Court for the confiscation of the Publishing House had not been decided, but it was believed that it would fail and the property will not be confiscated; this, however, is, of course, a mere opinion. Bishop Soule is yet living, but feeble. He retains his mental faculties wonderfully, and is still devoted to the cause of God and Southern Methodism. Some Yankee deserters attempted to rob his house a few nights before we reached Nashville, but the old hero, with gun in hand, confronted them and drove them from his premises, receiving no injury at their hands.

I must not trust myself now to write all I saw and heard, while in "my own, my native land"—God bless dead trodden and oppressed Tennessee; she is a noble State and has a noble people. AN IMPOSTER AT LARGE. William Anderson (or Andrew) Jackson Fulton, (or Walton) lately in charge of the Methodist Church in Washington, Ga., an Englishman, having been accused of having deserted two wives in the West, has suddenly disappeared. He left Washington on Thursday, 8th Dec, stating that he was coming to Augusta, and has not since been heard from. He has his credentials and will try to pass as a preacher through the hands of Confederate Officers and Provost Marshals. Will the preachers generally try to have him intercepted, and his papers restored to the Church. He is slightly built, has dark hair and eyes, one upper front tooth out, clean shaven, and may be certainly known by his left arm being nearly a hand's length shorter than the right, a defect he may try to conceal under a dark cloth overcoat, with a long heavy cape, which he probably wears. His accent is strongly provincial, he has been a tailor, and has a peculiar shuffling walk.

All good citizens should endeavor to arrest him and bring him to justice. His flight has fixed the conviction, that the charge is true that he has three wives at least, now living; and he has passed perhaps by the names of Jackson, Walton and Fulton at different times. He lately called himself W. A. J. Fulton. Information respecting him is solicited. It may be addressed to the Southern Christian Advocate, Augusta, Ga. E. H. MYERS, Editor.

A CERUOUS PRAYER.—A correspondent of the Western Christian Advocate sends that paper the following: "A reverend gentleman, direct from the interior of Texas, stayed at my house a few days at the time Millerism was at its zenith in Cincinnati. He related to me a rumor which he had heard in Texas of a man he met in our streets as a millerite preacher. In Texas this man got permission to preach in a school house, and took occasion to abuse all other denominations. He said there were men who professed to be called and commissioned of God to preach the Gospel, but that he pretended to no such high credentials. After abusing all who would not say amen to his views, being about to close, a wag whispered to him, if he wished some one to close for him, to call on Mr H.—He did so. Mr H.—took the stand, gave out a hymn, and then prayed in this wise: "Lord we thank thee that thou hast ever sent thy ministers among us; we were a very wicked people before they came; some of us, however, have reformed. We thank thee that thou hast called, commissioned and sent thy ministers to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ; but as for this fellow, he has told us that thou didst not commission him, and we believe him. We hear strange stories of him Lord, we know not whether they be true or not, but thou knowest; but we hear he went to Galveston a gambler; that afterwards he became a preacher; that the young men who knew him in these characters thought them incompatible, and, in consequence, ducked him in the bay; from which, we doubt not, he dates his commission to preach the doctrine he has proclaimed to us! We then hear also, that he stole a horse at Galveston; we know not whether it be true Lord, thou knowest; but one thing we do know—that is, we know that he stole with the widow C.—and we know that no decent man would stop there." By this time the preacher was making his escape, without dismissing his congregation, and soon afterwards was holding forth in the big tent of Millerism in Cincinnati.

The San Antonio Herald says that the French on arriving in Matamoros saluted the Confederate flag and passed the Yankee flag in silent contempt.

SOLDIERS' PAY—SOLDIERS' BONDS. The Richmond Sentinel makes some explanations in reference to the deferred pay of our armies. Delay in payment has caused many complaints, but it may be readily conceived that it has not been altogether avoidable in the year just closed. The act of last February, imposing a heavy tax on all currency floated on the first of April, naturally created a reluctance on the part of Government creditors to receive payment in the interim, in the notes which were to be so soon depreciated. Nor would it have been fair to press these notes on the soldiers. All were waiting for the new money. The pressure in consequence, after the 1st of April, exceeded the possibility of meeting it. The new notes could not be made fast enough, especially amid the unavoidable interruptions and because of the fact that so large a proportion was required to be absorbed in exchanging the new money for the old. This heavy arrears on the first of April, and the difficulties at which we have glanced, have necessarily pressed upon the Treasury during the year—preventing, it may be, that entire punctuality in every respect which was desirable.

Our soldiers shared some of the inconveniences; but we trust it will not be long before the Government will be able to pay up all their dues. If, to procure for them supplies of food and clothing, as a first object, their wages have in some cases been necessarily deferred for the time, we hope they will acquiesce with that cheerful patience which they have so uniformly exhibited under their privations, and which has won for them a praise scarce second to that due to their conspicuous gallantry and their admirable patriotism and good temper. We feel warranted in assuring them that every thing possible will be done to bring up all their arrears at the earliest day; and we believe that it will not be long ere this is accomplished.

With reference to the bounty bonds which many soldiers are entitled by the act of February 17, 1864, it is stated that it is only recently that the law has defined the form of these bonds. Since that has been done the subject has engaged the diligent attention of the Treasury Department, and the bond will be ready for delivery, with as little delay as the magnitude of the issue will allow. These bonds will be prized by our soldiers not merely for their value, but as certificates of their gallantry and will be prized, and it is designed to give them a character and appearance worthy of the interesting circumstances of their issue. They will be coupon bonds, and will run for thirty years from the 1st of October, 1864, the interest payable semi-annually.—Petersburg Express.

HOW QUOTAS ARE FILLED IN YANKEEDOM.—Brigadier General G. W. Hinks, of the United States Army, in command of recruiting rendezvous, Hart's island, near New York, has recently addressed an interesting letter to the Adjutant-General respecting the recruiting and bounty system. His statements will seem incredible only to those who have not had opportunities of knowing how the Yankee recruiting business has been carried on. The swindle on the Government and people have been unprecedented. General Hinks says: "Felony is compounded and crime condemned by magistrates, that criminals may be sent into the army to stain its fair fame, imperil its success and dishonor its faithful soldiers, or desert its banners and join the enemy, enlist again in some other locality, consummating a double fraud—all to fill the quotas.

"Drunkards, useless for any purpose of life, are suborned to desert the Government and country by enlisting as soldiers—to fill the quotas. "Imbeciles and lunatics are ejected to enlist, and defrauded of their bounty by designing knaves, but no one appears to object—for it fills the quotas. "Rebel spies, refugees, and fugitives from justice, are assisted to enlist in our armies, from which they pass, with well-filled pockets, directly into the Confederacy—but it fills the quotas. "Men cooped up, dragged, or stupefied with intoxicating liquors, and coerced to enlist under assumed names, which, oftentimes, they themselves are unable to remember; and no one detects the fraud until they become sobered at the general rendezvous, because every one is entirely engrossed—in filling the quotas.

"Soldiers from our armies are assisted if not persuaded, to desert, and are concealed until they can be conducted to some remote locality to enlist again, by the extensive combination of runners and brokers, whose connections ramify the whole country to such an extent that a regular system is created of depleting our armies—to fill the quotas.

Some surgeons in London have succeeded by scientific operations, in giving sight to persons born blind. There are touching descriptions of the surprise and confusion to those to whom the world is first opened.

JAPANESE RESIDENCE IN JAPAN.—During more than a half-century the little folks I have never seen a quarrel among young or old. I have never seen a blow struck, scarcely an angry face. I have seen the children at their sports, flying kites on the hills, and so much of intermingled strings or kites lodged in trees provoked angry words of impatience. I have seen them intent on their games of jack stones and marbles under the shaded gateways of the temples, but I have never seen an approach to a quarrel among them. They are taught implicit obedience to their parents, but I have never seen one of them chastised. Respect and reverence to the aged is universal. A crying child in a rarely seldom heard or seen. We have nothing to teach them in this respect out of our abundant civilization. I speak what I know of the little folks of Japan, for more than any other foreigner have I been among them.—Correspondent Home Journal.