The Greensborough Patriot.

VOL. XXIV. GREENSBOROUGH, N. C., THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 1862. NO. 1,193.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, BY

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EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

TERMS, $2.00 A YEAR IN ADVANCE.

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Report of Secretary of War upon the Negotiations for the Exchange of Prisoners

WAR DEPARTMENT, March 17th, 1862

Sir: In the report made to you at the commencement of the present session, the following passage was contained:

"Negotiations with the enemy have recently been in progress for the exchange of prisoners. They are not yet entirely completed, and to avoid further delay in submitting this report, they will be presented in a separate communication."

The negotiations have now been concluded in a manner little to be expected, and I present a narrative of the action of this Department on the subject.

When Congress first determined to use private armed vessels for the public defence, the President of the United States declared his purpose to treat our seamen on such vessels as pirates. No apprehension was entertained of any attempt to put this menace in execution. The putting to death of prisoners of war is regarded as murder by all civilized nations, and it was considered certain that the judgment of mankind would suffice to deter the enemy from the commission of such a crime.—When, however, some of our fellow citizens were captured on privateers, they were treated as felons, confined in the jails appropriated to criminals, and one of them was capitally convicted for no other crime than fighting at sea in the defence of his country. Under these circumstances, the following order was issued by the Department.

RICHMOND, November 9, 1861.

SIR: You are hereby instructed to choose by lot from among the prisoners of war of highest rank, one who is to be confined in a jail appropriated to convicted felons, and who is to be treated in all respects as if such person were to be held for execution in the same manner as may be adopted by the enemy in the execution of the prisoner of war, Smith, recently condemned to death in Philadelphia.

You will also select thirteen other prisoners of war, the highest in rank of those captured by our forces, to be confined in the cells reserved for prisoners accused of infamous crimes, and will treat them as such a course as the enemy shall continue to treat the like number of prisoners of war captured by them at sea and now held confined in New York as pirates.

These measures are intended to repress the contemplated attempt now made by the enemy to commit judicial murder on prisoners of war, you will execute them strictly as the mode best calculated to prevent the commission of so heinious a crime.

Your obedient servant,

(signed) J. P. BENJAMIN,

Acting Secretary of War.

To Brigadier General John H. Winder, Richmond.

This prompt and necessary measure of retaliation produced the desired effect. After the lapse of some days, the enemy released the Smith from confinement as felons, the captain was liberated from his cell, and the officers were placed professedly on the footing as other prisoners of war.—At the same time the new Secretary of War of the United States made to this Department the novel proposal that two of the officers should be permitted to travel at leisure through our country, visiting the prisoners of war held by us and ministering to their supposed wants. As it was deemed probable that this proposal was made with any expectation of its acceptance, the purpose really entertained by the enemy was sought for, and from certain expressions contained in the letter, the conclusion was reached that an exchange of prisoners was intended. The letter of the United States Secretary of War was accordingly treated as a proposition for exchange, and answered as such.

In this answer the enemy was informed that his proposition was "cordially welcomed as being "in entire accordance with the views always entertained by this Government." My communication stated as the basis of the agreement for the exchange, "man for man and officer of equal grade, assimilating the grades of the officers of the army and navy in accordance with established usage when necessary, and proceeding upon equitable terms for the number of officers of inferior grade, to be exchanged for any officer of higher grade when the occasion shall arise for an exchange." Additional proposals were made in the same letter, and for a complete understanding of all that occurred, I have the honor to annex copies of the correspondence, as follows:

A letter of Hon. Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War of the United States, dated 20th January, 1862, addressed to Messrs. Ames and Fish, with instructions for their proposed mission.

A letter of 4th February, 1862, from Major General Wool, commanding at Fort Monroe, to Major Gen. Huger, commanding at Norfolk, enclosing copy of the letter above mentioned, asking for a safe conduct for the two commissioners and exchange the reciprocal right of visit to us.

A letter of 6th of February, 1862, from the undersigned, Secretary of War, addressed to Messrs. James A. Seddon and Richard M. Conrad, Commissioners selected by the authorities of this Government, giving them instructions to meet Messrs. Ames and Fish, and negotiate a general exchange of prisoners, with specific details of the basis of exchange. In closing this letter the following remarks were made:

"I have said nothing on the subject of those privateers recently treated as felons, in many I have been gratified to find from the statements of the public journals, that these captives are henceforth to be treated as prisoners of war. It is however, so extremely unsafe to rely on newspaper statements, that it will be well for you to request an official assurance of this fact from Messrs. Ames and Fish, in order that the prisoners held by us as hostages be at once relieved from their exceptional condition and comprehended in the general exchange."

D.—Form a letter sent to Gen. Huger, to be by him addressed to Gen. Wool, and which was dated at Norfolk on the 9th February, and forwarded to its address.

E.—The answer of Gen. Wool to Gen. Huger, dated at Fort Monroe on the 13th February, stating that he alone "was clothed with full powers for the exchange of prisoners," "that he was "prepared to arrange for the restoration of all the prisoners to their homes on fair terms of exchange, man for man and officer for officer of equal grade, assimilating the grade of officers of the army and navy when necessary, and agreeing upon equitable terms for the number of men or officers of inferior grade to be exchanged for any of higher grade when the occasion shall arise."

Also "that all the surplus prisoners on either side be discharged on parole, with the agreement that any prisoners of war, taken by the other party, shall be returned in exchange as fast as captured, and this system to be continued while hostilities continue."

General Wool further gave assurance "that the prisoners taken on board of vessels or otherwise in maritime conflict, by the forces of the United States, have been put and are now held only in military custody, and on the same footing as other prisoners taken in arms."

Finally, General Wool declared himself ready to confer for the purposes of arranging the exchange, either with General Huger or with Messrs. Seddon and Conrad, or any other person appearing for that purpose.

Before proceeding with my narrative, I beg to call your special attention to the fact that the letter of instruction to Messrs. Seddon and Conrad, a copy of which was enclosed to Gen. Wool, contained the identical propositions just quoted from his letter; that our proposal to the enemy was thus accepted in the fullest and most explicit manner; and I place prominently in view the further fact, that at the time when the proposal was made by the Government that all surplus prisoners held by either party should be delivered up and allowed to go home till exchanged, and that this system should continue in force during this war, the Confederate States held in their possession a large surplus of prisoners who were to be restored to the enemy by this stipulation.

The principles and terms for a general exchange of prisoners having been thus finally agreed on, there remained nothing to be done but to settle the details of the time, place and manner of its execution.—For this purpose civil commissioners were not necessary, a military officer had been properly selected by the enemy for executing mere military details, and in accordance with their example, Brigadier-General Howell Cobb was selected to meet Gen. Wool and execute the contract:

F.—Letter of instructions dated 18th February, to Gen. Cobb, suggesting details of execution deemed fair and equal, but adding, "any fair and equal rule will be satisfactory, provided you can see your way clear as regards its practical working. I desire only to impress on you the necessity of extreme caution in avoiding any rule or any arrangement which could possibly give rise to dispute or controversy in its practical operation. Let the arrangement be equal; and let it be simple, plain and clear. All else is left to your discretion."

In the same letter General Cobb was told "that the assurance contained in the letter of General Wool that our privateers captured on the high seas will in the future be considered in the same light as prisoners taken in arms on land, and will be consequently exchanged like other prisoners, is entirely satisfactory, and you are requested to inform General Wool that as soon as this assurance was received, orders were issued placing the officers hitherto held as hostages for these privateers on the same footing as all other prisoners, and they will at once be sent home on parole under the proposed arrangments for exchange."

General Cobb proceeded on his mission and arranged with General Wool all the details of the exchange on the basis of the agreement above stated. Two of the details suggested in the instructions by this Department to General Cobb were not accepted by General Wool. For one of these he proposed a substitute which was promptly accepted. For the other, admitted by him to be worthy of approval, he offered no substitute but asked to obtain authority from his Government, as he declared himself to be without instructions. This authority was not granted to him whereupon General Cobb waived his proposition, thus having complete and perfect all the details requisite to the execution of the previous contract.

But pending these arrangements our arms had been unfortunate; the enemy had captured a number of prisoners at Roanoke Island and Fort Donelson; the condition of the parties was reversed; the United States now held a surplus of prisoners, and the execution of the agreement was for the moment disadvantageous to them. Under these circumstances the Government of the United States did not hesitate to violate an engagement universally considered to be one of peculiar sanctity. Gen. Wool after writing on the 13th of February that he had "full powers" and after agreeing "that all surplus prisoners on either side be discharged on parole, with the agreement that any prisoners of war taken by the other party shall be returned in exchange as fast as captured, and this system to be continued while hostilities continue," was compelled by his Government to write, on the 27th of the same month, that "it is proper to say, that my powers are exclusively limited to the exchange of prisoners as presented to Major General, on the 13th of February 1862; and then propose certain special exchanges of individual officers.

In the meantime, not distrusting for a moment that an engagement of so sacred a character would be executed with fidelity, the prisoners held by us as hostages for the safety and proper treatment of the privateers were discharged from close confinement and ordered to be sent home. Colonels Lee, Corswell and Wood, and Major Reverse were sent to their own country; the remaining hostages were brought on parole from distant points to Richmond on their way to be delivered up, at the expense of this Government, and their surrender was only suspended on receipt of intelligence from General Cobb that he saw reason to suspect bad faith on the part of the enemy. While this prompt and loyal execution of the agreement was in progress on the part of the Government, the enemy was conveying the prisoners captured at Fort Donelson to Chicago and other points most distant from their homes, and was parading the officers who fell into their power through the entire breadth of the land, from Western Tennessee to Fort Warren to Boston harbor, where they are now incarcerated; and up to the present moment not a single officer taken at Fort Donelson, not a single captive privateer, has been restored to his home, while the United States have kept possession of the hostages given up in reliance to their honor.—The document G. herewith submitted is the report of General Cobb, containing a statement of his proceedings and copies of his correspondence with General Wool, and the document H. contains the letter of General Wool, dated the 5th of the current month, from which it is apparent that the Government of the United States adheres to the refusal to perform its agreement.

I make no comment on these proceedings further than to remark that it seems scarcely possible that there should be any further exchange of prisoners during the war. We can parole no prisoners with any expectation of reciprocity; and can have no reliance on any promises that may be made. I submit, however, that it is but bare justice to ourselves to declare discharged such of our own citizens as are now subject to parole, and so to inform the enemy, and thereafter to entertain no propositions on the subject of exchange of prisoners except on delivery of those held by the enemy and proposed for exchange.

I am your obedient servant,

J. P. BENJAMIN,

To the President. Secretary of War.

From the London Times 1st inst.

The War Must be Ended.

"This war must be settled somehow."—The world has been waiting to hear these words. The present moment is, perhaps, rather earlier than one one expected, but already we catch the expected phrase, borne in confidential whispers across the Atlantic. It has found birth in Wall street, it stirs gently in its cradle, and it is swathed in unconvertible rags. No one yet dares to own it openly. The thousands of vultures who are living upon their prey would scream horribly, and attack with beaks and claws any one who should, without adequate power, interfere with their banquet; but still the phrase is heard, and it is growing into more potent voice—"In some way or other this war must be settled."

"Wait a while; wait just ninety days, and the rebellion will be crushed," is still the cry; as it has been for thrice ninety days, the cry of the contractors, the Government officials, the fanatics, and all who find power, or profit, or distinction in this civil war. The merchants, and trading classes have waited, and what do they see? They see the Atlantic cities withering from hour to hour; they see the warehouses empty, the larger dwelling houses untenanted, property valueless, and trade dying. They see a wasteful and corrupt expenditure of half a million sterling every day, and no results except an accelerated pace towards national insolvency and general ruin. Still they are told to wait another ninety days, and all will be well. It may be well for those smart individuals who, by that time, will have gathered all they can hope to gain, have realized their plunder, and lodged it where waste paper is not a legal tender.

But will it be well with the owners of house property in the East, who are now letting their stores rent free to any one who will pay the rates? Will it be well with the poor and thrifty producers of the West, who are condemned by the terms of the Constitution to be taxed in a ratio proportioned to population, and not to property? Will it be well with the holders of State bonds, which are higher to holding a respectable position as securities, but must now be overlaid by the mountain of national debt? Federal State securities and the possessors of paper money, who will look around in vain for some sources whence their claims may be met, and will awake to the reality that their property is but a delusion and a dream? This is all those who wait will ever see. The very joy and exultation which the "successes" of the last few weeks have caused in the North show how little the promoters of this war really expect that absolute conquest which they promise.

The capture of an earthwork on the Tennessee river even if it be followed by the capture of the stronger neighboring fort upon the river Constantine, is only one of the first of a long series of military preparations for a campaign in Kentucky and Tennessee.—If the invaders should obtain this success its use will only be to enable them to feed the army which has advanced through Kentucky, and to keep it in working order for operating on a theatre 500 miles distant from the opposing armies on the Potomac. A year of successes would only give them military possession of two years which were never among the most zealous in the Southern cause. As to the descent upon the east, they are annoyances rather than wounds. They are but like the burning darts which the Spaniards thrust into the flanks of a sluggish bull to sting him from his defensive posture.

A hundred such victories and such inroads as these tell nothing towards the conquest of a country half as large as Europe, if that country be really earnest in its own defense. The Southern States, before they revolted, must have expected all this, and much more. We have always in Europe given the North credit for first successes very greatly superior to these, and have reckoned that their real difficulties would only commence when they had mastered the great strategic points throughout the South. At the rate at which the war is now proceeding, it will take, not ninety days, but ninety years, to crush this rebellion; and the respective grandsons of General McClellan and General Beauregard may at last fight out the battle of Manassas.

Wall street begins to see all this more clearly. It was worth a costly experiment to retain that rich Southern business, and New York will be hard put to either win it back or to do without it. But the capitalists have now come to the conclusion that the game is up, and that that the experiment is passing out of their hands. The suggestion to raise $150,000,000 yearly by direct taxation, does not deceive them.—They know very well that, even if the sovereign people would submit to endure a taxation as heavy as that of England, America could not continuously raise more than £10,000,000 sterling annually. The rough calculation has always been that in capacity of taxation the proportion between the two countries is that American dollars are equal to English pounds sterling. If we raise £50,000,000, exclusive of our customs America probably could, if she please, raise $50,000,000 or £10,000,000. Such a possible revenue, even if it were not based upon the wild improbability that the Western States will consent to pay any such taxes, would be a very poor security for half the debt which has already accrued. In this state of things the commercial adage, "the first loss is the best," comes into play, and the capitalists of New York are now watching for the first opportunity when it may be safe to say openly, "This war must be settled somehow."

This "first loss" is indeed bad enough.—There are all the profits of the Southern agencies gone. The coffers are all drained by a disastrous loan of many millions. Having suspended specie payments, of course they cannot borrow any money from abroad, and they have a Government so recklessly manufacturing paper money that there is no hope of keeping up for any length of time the delusion that it is of value. Still there would be some hope if they could stop where they now are. Peace might restore to them some trade relations with the South, and while the more indolent Southerners have wealth, the sharp Northerner may always hope that he will get some of it.

How the frightful current expenditures can be stopped or how the war can be settled, it is, perhaps, premature to speculate. Nor do we venture to calculate that the power of capital is immediately felt as the decision on such a question. America has such imperishable advantages in her great unbroken wastes of fertile soil that no more financial difficulties can strangle her. She may borrow and repudiate over and over again, and ruin every capitalist she has, and yet rise again and thrive. But as such as this the interest of moneyed men are likely to be of great influence upon events. We are much misinformed if the commercial body in the great cities of Federal America has not recently veered round, and if there be not, all up and down Wall street, a general disgust and antipathy to that ninety days' bill, and an unanimous resolution to protest it when it next comes to maturity.

Gallant Capt. John H. Morgan. The Most Daring Feat Yet!

The newspaper fraternity owe a heavy debt of gratitude to that gallant partisan leader, Capt John H. Morgan, of Ky., for furnishing them, during the war spicy paragraphs and interesting articles, by his many dashing exploits against the Yankees. He is incessantly on the move, appearing suddenly and unexpectedly at one point, and within the next twenty four hours quite as suddenly and unexpectedly at some other place more than a hundred miles distant. He is a perfect terror to the Yankees, and has inspired them with greater fear than all the army of General Johnston besides. His last feat we are just apprised of by a gentlemen direct from Louisville, and is the most daring and successful we have yet recorded.

On Sunday, the 16th inst., Capt. Morgan with forty of his men, suddenly appeared at Gallatin, Tenn., 28 miles the other side of Nashville. After catching all the Union men in the place, and confining them in a guard house, Capt. Morgan, dressed in a Federal uniform proceeded to the telegraph office at the Depot, a short distance from the town. Entering the office, the following conversation took place between Captain Morgan and the telegraphic operator, a blustering fellow:

Capt. Morgan.—"Good day, sir! What news have you?"

Operator.—"Nothing, sir, except it is reported that that d—d rebel, Capt. John Morgan, is this side of the Cumberland with some of his cavalry. I wish I could get sight of the d—d rascal. I'd make a hole through him larger than he would find pleasant.

While speaking, the operator drew a fine navy revolver and flourished it as to satisfy his visitor how desperately he would use the instrument in case he should meet with the famous rebel Captain.

"Do you know who I am?" quickly remarked Capt. Morgan, continuing the conversation.

"I have not that pleasure," remarked the operator.

Well, I am Capt. Morgan," responded that gentleman.

At these words the operator's cheeks blanched, his knees shook, the revolver dropped from his hands, and he sunk to the floor. He literally "wilted."

After the frightened individual had recovered himself sufficiently, Captain Morgan required him to telegraph some messages to Louisville, among others, one to Prentice, of the *Journal*, politely offering to act as his escort on his proposed visit to Nashville. Then taking the operator with him as a prisoner, Capt. Morgan with his men awaited the arrival of the train from Bowling Green for Nashville.

In due time the train came thundering in. Capt. Morgan at once seized it, and taking five Federal officers who were passengers and the engineer of the train prisoners, he burned to cinders all of the cars with their contents, and then filling the locomotive with turpentine, shut down all the valves and started it towards Nashvile. Before it had run eight hundred yards the accumulation of steam caused it to explode, shivering it into a thousand atoms. Capt. Morgan then started southward with his prisoners and made his way safely to the Confederate army.

The bridge over Barren River beyond Bowling Green, has not yet been rebuilt, and the Federals had only one locomotive and one train of cars, with which to do all their business between Bowling Green and Nashville. The serious damage inflicted upon the Federals by this dashing exploit may be appreciated from this fact.—*Atlanta Confederacy.*

Partial Legislation.

The Act of our State Convention exempting the publishers and printers of the Daily papers of the State from military service but failing to include the weekly semi and tri weekly press, is an outrage that calls for scathing rebuke. We would like to see the yeas and nays on the vote—we desire to spot every man that voted for this shameful and unjust act; unjust because it is partial; parctical because it confers privileges on the pampered few which are denied to others equally deserving the benefit of the act. We call upon the weekly and semi weekly press of the State, to denounce, indignantly, the contemtible act, and not only to "spot" every man that voted for it, but to put a flea in his ear that will torment him even in his dreams. Upon what meats hath the daily press fed? What "exclusive privileges" are they entitled to over the weekly press? Of what more 'importance' are they? What greater benefit are they? And where are they and what are they? Who knows one outside of the county in which it is printed? Hardly one man out of five hundred. There are but two or three dailies in the State; of their importance we shall not speak; but we may say they went the whole hog for precipitating the revolution that they stand out of; and a kind and considerate Convention has graciously conferred "exclusive privileges" on them. The "Chronicle" opposed precipitantcy or revolution first and preparation afterwards, but it asked for no law to shield its publishers from a participation in the battle field. Indeed, at the first blast of the bugle one of its Editors shouldered the musket (not epaulets!) and hied to the battle field; that musket he still stands by—never having sought to 'dodge' it by slipping in a soft or fat place—the Chronicle and all other weekly pepers in the State, maintain that they have as much right to share in "exclusive privileges" conferred by acts of legislation as the pampered and "favored few" daily papers in the State.

We shall expect the sage Convention, on reassembling, to put all the papers in the State on the same platform, by abolishing the act or amending it so as to include the weekly press. A wise head and unpatriotic heart might see at a glance the propriety of exempting the whole press, for "the press is more powerful than the sword." So thought and spake a wise man—a statesman, who did not mean two or three obscure daily papers. In the crisis of a revolution the press is the power that wields the sword. At the sounding of its voice, men rush to arms, and the sword leaps from its scabbard. But our grave Convention throttles the press—hushes its thundering voice—save the feeble cry of two or three "priveleged" daily journals! Out upon that conventional act! Change your law, and make "exemption" optionary with those connected with the press. Printers as a class, need laws to hold them back from the battle field, in a just cause They require no statute enactments to push them forward—and when convinced that they can be of more service to the Country in the field than by publishing papers, laws can't hold them, unless they are stronger than hooks of steel.—*Milton Chronicle.*

A Speech from Mr. Yancey.

Hon. W. L. Yancey, who has recently returned from his unsuccessful mission abroad made a short speech last Thursday night at the St. Charles Hotel, New Orleans. We copy from the Delta the following sketch of his remarks:

It was one year, lacking two days, since he had quit our shores, and he was glad to stand among his countrymen again. He came back convinced that we had no friends in Europe, that we must fight the battle out, and rely only upon firm hearts. (Applause.) They cooked coldly on the South because of its slavery institutions. There was not a country in Europe who sympathized with us. Even the great principles of our revolution were not understood by them, any more than by the Northernets, who have never been able to seive the true spirit of our institutions. With the North, Europe believed in the unqualified supremacy of government, not understanding that government is made for the people. They have, therefore, no friendship for us, no sympathy with us; neither have they, however for the North. They regard the North as a people mendacious, unjust, and hypocritical. They do not believe a word said by the people, the press, the Cabinet, or the President. Europeans are prejudiced against slavery, but they do not wish to deprive men of their property without honestly paying for it, they have no idea of cutting the chains of bondage with a lawless sword. They have discovered the Northern motive in this war to be political, not social; not a strong principle against wrong, but a determination to rule. Having, therefore, no sympathy for us, and turning with honest contempt from the hypocritical Yankee, they would look with positive indifference on the contest, but for their own interests involved. They desire to cripple a dangerous rival. This country was getting too vigorous, and they are determined that it shall forever remain separated. They would never allow the South to be subjugated, and would interfere to prevent such a result, but that they feel certain it cannot be accomplished. They know and say the South will be free. In the meantime, they wish to see the war drag on until each side is thoroughly exhausted and overwhelmed with a debt which shall crush its energies for years, or if possible, for ages to come. To further this policy they ignore the established fact that the blockade has been run at least a thousand times. They set aside, practically as against us, the plainest behests of the European treaty which fixes the law of blockade. They are determined, in the face of all law, of all equity, of all humanity, not to recognize us until the last possible moment, and *will never do so until they see our blood-reeking sword stretched over a conquered and prostate North.*

As to the blockade, said Mr. Yancey, I don't know that we should want it raised If it continued six months longer, he would not, on any consideration, wish such a misfortune as that it should be raised. By that time our internal energies will have been developed, our manufactures established and he had such confidence in the ingenuity and enterprise of our people as to believe them capable of attaining, within themselves, all necessary ends. As to luxuries, indulgence in them was not becoming to a people laboring in the very throes of a heroic struggle. Various causes had hitherto prevented the forcible raising of the blockade. In the first place, when the blockade commenced to take effect, immense stocks of cotton were in the hands of the wealthiest manufacturers. Those men had the ear of Government, and it was decidedly to their interest that the blockade should continue until their stock on hand was sold at exorbitant prices. Government, too, was the more willing to listen to them, because it was desirous of fostering the products of cotton outside of the Southern States, even at the expense of heavy temporary sufferings at home.

Our principal ground of miscalculation as to the blockade had been the idea that cotton is king. If by this it is understood American cotton, it is a fallacy. American cotton certainly plays a mighty part in the commerce of the world, but it has not absolute sway, because the staple is raised too abundantly elsewhere. For hundreds of years India has raised as much cotton as the South now does. There is probably no one thing in the world which grows so universally as cotton. Europe therefore, was willing to take advantage of the crisis to enfranchise herself from our sway at almost any cost, but she has found the ordeal too severe. India cotton is too dear, and the whole machinery of their immense manufactories would have to be changed to suit the staple. Orleans middling has been found by experience to be the only thing that will exactly do, and the supply of that will be exhausted by the 1st of April.—Then, when a starving population rises around their thrones, with the words, "Cotton or blood," the blockade will be raised.

Here Mr. Yancey was asked by a gentleman whether Mr. Seward's promise to open a cotton port had great weight? Mr. Yancey replied emphatically, no. They believed the Yankees to be a nation of mendacious liars. It was imposible now in Europe to get at the truth of things over here. Facts got there filtrated through the medium of Northern papers, and the strength was all gone. No Southern journal was allowed to reach them, and that indeed it had been so to a great extent before the war. People there got their ideas of the South from New York papers and Boston literateurs. They gave us credit for being a brave people, determined to be free, but reckless of life, somewhat inhuman to slaves, and at best, semi-civilized; and that our sense of individuality went so far that each man considered his will as paramount to the law. We cannot look for any sympathy or help from abroad.—We must rely upon ourselves alone.

Andy Johnston at his Dirty Work.

The publication of the Nashville Daily Times has been suppressed. On the 18th instant, it made its last appearance. The Alanta Intelligencer has the issue of the 18th, and from it extracts the following:

TO THE PUBLIC.

On yesterday, Gov. Johnston, who had requested an interview with the publishers of the city papers, stated to the representatives of the Times and the Patriot the terms and conditions upon which the publication of the papers in this city would be permitted. These terms and conditions are such that it will be impossible to comply with them and make an independant journal, such as the Times was intended to be, and we, therefore, submit to the "military necessity" which terminates its existence with this issue.

The Times was established in connection with one of the publishers of the Union and American, in order to furnish employment and a means of subsistence to the former employees on that paper. It had no other connection with the Union and American. It sought the path of independent journalism, and for this is has fallen under the ban of the Military Gov.—who seems not to coincide with Thomas Jefferson, that "error ceases to be dangerous when truth is left free to combat it,"—and "down it goes" until such time, if ever, as we can publish an independent journal.

It is thus that the traitor Andy Johnson begins his dirty work in Nashville. Let the matter go on. There is a day of retribution in store for the villain, which God grant may prove an early one.

RYE COFFEE.—Dr. E. M. Pendleton, of Sparta, Ga., communicates the following to the Augusta Sentinel. It completely refuses the theory of the LaGrange physician which we published a day or two since:

An extract from in your daily of Tuesday, signed L. J. Roberts, M. D., taken from the LaGrange Reporter contains two such grave errors that we cannot refrain from correcting them, particulary as many persons who use rye as a substitute for coffee might be frightened out of an innocent beverage.

The extract says that, "The grain when burnt contains fifty per cent. of phosphoric acid." Now unscientific people would suppose this to mean when parched. We suppose the docter intended the ash of the grain. What is the true analysis of rye according to the best authorities? 1,000 pounds produces only 10½ pounds of ash; and of this 10½ pounds only 0.46 of a pound is phosophoric acid; not quite half a pound to 1,000 pounds of the grain, and not quite 5 per cent of the ash instead of upwards of 50 per cent., being not quite the one fifth of one per cent of the solid grain. Besides, the doctor forgets that not one particle of the earthly salts is probably held in solution by a common weak decoction of the rye; and if the whole grain was swallowed there would only be the medium amount of phosphoric acid contained in wheat and other cereals, just about enough to make bone instead of destroying it.

The, effect of rye, or the phosphoric acid in it, on utere-gestation, is equally fallacious, and quite as grave an error. It is the ergot of rye that produces abortion, not the common, healthy grain used for coffee. It is a long, black stinking grain, easily distinguished from the other, and only occurring under certain unfavorable circumstances. The common rye is quite as innocent as wheat or coffee in this respect.

From the North.

The following interesting statement of the great naval battle in Hampton Roads was furnished to the N. Y. World by A. B. Smith, pilot on board the Cumberland at the time of the battle, and is far the most candid acccount that has yet been received from a Yankee source.

THE BATTLE OF HAMPTON ROADS.

On Saturday morning the U. S. sloop of war Cumberland laid off in the Roads at Newport News, about 300 yards from the shore, the Congress being 200 yards South of us. About 11 o'clock, a dark looking object was descried coming around Craney Island, thro' Norfolk channel, and proceeding straight in our direction. It was instantly recognized as the Merrimac. We had been on the lookout for her for sometime, and were as well prepared then as we could have been at any other time, or as we have been during the last six months.

As she came ploughing through the water right onwards towards our port, bow, she looked like like a huge half submerged crocodile. Her sides seemed of solid iron, except where the guns pointed from the narrow ports, and rose slantingly from the water like the roof of a house or the arched back of a tortoise. Probably the extreme height of the apex from the water's edge, perpendicularly, was ten feet. At her prow I could see the iron projecting straight forward, somewhat above the water's edge, and apparantly a mass of iron. Small boats were slung or fastened to her sides, and the Confederate flag floated from one staff while a pennant was fixed to another at the stern. There was a smoke stack or pipe near her middle, and she was probably a propeller, no side wheels or machinery being vissible. She is probably covered with railroad iron.

GETTING READY FOR ACTION.

Immediately on the appearing of the Merrimac the command was given to make ready for instant action. All hands were ordered to their places, and the Cumberland was sprung across the channel, so that her broadside would bear on the Merrimac. The armament we could bring to bear on the Merrimac was about eleven nine and ten inch Dahlgren guns and two pivot guns of the same make. The gunners were at their posts, and we waited eagerly for her approach within range. She came up at the rate of four or five knots per hour.

OPENING THE BATTLE.

When the Merrimac arrived within about a mile we opened on her with our pivot guns, and as soon as we could bear upon her, our whole broadside commenced. Still she came on, the balls bouncing from her mailed sides like India rubber, apparently making not the least impression, except to cut off her flag-staff and thus bring down the Confederate colors. None of her crew ventured at that time on her outside to replace them, and she fought thenceforward with only her pennant flying. She appeared to obey her helm and was very readily handled, making all her movements and evolutions with apparent facility and readiness. We had probably fired six or eight broadsides when a shot was received from one of her guns which killed five of our marines.

It was impossible for our vessel to get out of her way, and the Merrimac soon crashed her iron-horn or ram into the Cumberland just starboard the main chins, under the bluff of the port bow, knocking a hole in the side, near the water line, as large as the head of a hogshead, and driving the vessel back upon her anchors with great force. The water came rushing into the hole. The Merrimac then backed out and discharged her guns at us, the shot passing through the main bay and killing five sick men. The water was all the while rushing in the hole made by the ram, so that in five minutes it was up to the sick bay on the berth deck. In the mean time her broadsides swept our men away, killed and maimed, and also set our vessel on fire in the forward part. That fire was extinguished. I cannot tell how many were wounded. The sick bay, berth deck and gun deck were almost literally covered with men killed and wounded, but the surviving ones still fought well, and every one, officers and men, displayed the utmost heroism.

The fight lasted about three-fourths of an hour, the Cumberland firing rapidly, and all the time the water pouring in the hole, and by the ports, as her bow kept sinking deeper and deeper. Near the middle of the fight, when the berth deck of the Cumberland had sunk below water, one of the crew of the Merrimac came out of a port to the outside of her iron-plated roof, and a ball from one of our guns instantly cut him in two That was the last and only Confederate that ventured within sight; the rest remained in their safe, iron-walled enclosure. We fired constantly, and the Merrimac occasionally, but every shot told upon our wooden vessel and brave crew—Her guns being without the least elavation, pointed straight at us along the surface of the water, and her nearness, she being much of the time within three hundred yards, made it an easy matter to send each ball to its exact mark. Probably her guns would be useless at a considerable distance, as it appears impossible to elevate them.

Finally, after about three-fourths of an hour of the most severe fighting, our vessel sunk, the Stars and Stripes still waving. The flag was finally submerged; but, after the hull grounded on the sand, fifty-four feet below the surface of the water, our penant was still flying from the topmost