

MESSAGE OF HIS EXCELLANCY Z. B. VANCE, TO THE General Assembly of North Carolina.

CONCLUDED. The resolution referring to the reinforcement of the army is worthy of your special and earnest attention. The Supreme Court having in the case of Johnson & Mallett affirmed the opinion advanced by me in my last message, that the exemption of officers and agents of the State is derived from higher grounds than the act of Congress, thus placing it as favorably as the friends of State sovereignty desire, it becomes us to examine carefully to see if there be not many who could, of our own grace, be spared to the service of the country.

By a recent agreement entered into between our government and that of the enemy, it is provided that each may have the privilege of supplying its soldiers held as prisoners of war by the other with necessary articles. Judge Child, our Commissioner of Exchange, informs me, that the same privilege will be extended to the States, I therefore ask your consent to expend, should it be necessary, a portion of our funds abroad, not exceeding \$5,000 sterling, for the benefit of North Carolina soldiers held in Northern prisons—officers and men. I understand the United States will parole any officer designated for this purpose, which would guarantee an easy and proper disposition of the funds.

The report of the Surgeon General, which is sent in, is worthy of your consideration. I doubt if any department of the State Government has done more good to our soldiers with so small an expenditure of money. Every effort will be made to increase its usefulness and extend its aid wherever a suffering soldier can be found. I desire also to call your attention to the subject of the supply of salt. The monthly reports of Mr. D. G. Worth, Superintendent of the State works at Wilmington, are herewith submitted. From these it will be seen that owing to the unwarranted (as I conceive) interference of the General commanding that department, the production of salt from that source has greatly fallen off and considerable loss has been incurred in labor and material.

I have received no written report for many months from Mr. Woodfin, our Commissioner at Saltville, Va., but understand they are making about 150 bushels per day. The principal difficulty at that point is in getting it away, the transportation being entirely under the control of the Confederate government and the State of Virginia. I have recently been endeavoring to hire or buy engines to put on the Virginia roads to transport our salt, and hope to succeed. Without this, the chance for getting away any is bad, except in wagons. Through Mr. Woodfin I have also made an excellent contract with Stewart, Buchanan & Co., for the purchase of 54,000 bushels at six dollars per bushel, deliverable at the works. A considerable quantity of this has already been delivered and paid for, and more is ready awaiting transportation. An appropriation is called for to meet this amount, which can be refunded to the Treasurer when the salt is sold. A small appropriation is also required to pay the amount of taxes levied, somewhat to my surprise, by the State of Virginia upon our property at the works, likewise a somewhat larger one for the erection of those at Wilmington. The papers submitted will enable your committee to estimate the amounts required. Notwithstanding all the difficulties thrown in our way, I think I could safely assure you of a supply of salt provided transportation can be had.

The subject of our Common Schools is one which I beg you will not forget amid the great concerns of the war. The efforts making by the friends of education with our zealous and indefatigable Superintendent at their head, to prevent the public from losing sight of this great interest, is worthy of our admiration. I earnestly recommend to your consideration the whole subject, and especially the system of graded schools advocated by the Superintendent, for which memorials will be presented by the Literary Board, and the Educational Association of North Carolina. I also suggest that regular teachers be exempted from State military duty whilst employed in teaching. Though fully aware of the importance of their vocation, I have not felt at liberty to excuse them, under existing laws. The common schools should surely be kept going at every cost, and if sufficient inducements cannot be offered to disabled soldiers and educated women to take hold of them, the necessary males should be exempted. Surely, though, if convinced of the great necessity, our patriotic country-women would assist, in the absence of these male instructors, in preparing the minds of the rising generation to appreciate the Government which this one institution to establish. When we see so little doing to educate the youth soon to succeed us, and behold abroad the vicious and demoralizing influences everywhere blighting the land, it is enough to fill one with shuddering for the future. Truly the mental furrows are gaping for the seed, and if the good be not put in, the crop of evil will be spontaneous and fearful. It is with pride that I observe the publication in

our State of various new school books, credit alike to the authors and to the public which has extended them. Our great system of Common Schools, after all, our only true and solid foundation for public education, and demands your constant and fostering care. The execution of the law becomes more and more difficult, owing not so much to the increase of crime, in my opinion, as to the want of boldness in the civil magistrates. Many complaints continue to reach me from all parts of the State of depredations and outrages of straggling soldiers, illegal imprisonments of property by Confederate agents, and many high-handed violations of civil rights by military commanders. Most of the sufferers appeal to me for redress, which I am often unable to afford them. They forget that the law still exists, and that it is their right and duty to apply it, whenever and by whomsoever aggravated, in the ancient way. The General in command, and the private soldier alike, may be and should be arrested for any offence against the rights or liberties of the citizen, and if resistance is made, the whole military force of the State would be brought to bear, to enforce submission. One wrong redressed by the law would be worth twenty redressed by Executive appeal to the superior officer of the offender.

In this connection I call your attention to the insufficiency of the pay of our Judges. The expenses should be three times on the circuit without limitation of the amount, at least. I regard this situation in this respect as worse than any other public servants, and earnestly invite you to the remedy. The war still drags its slow length along. Gen. Lee has been materially reinforced, and all hope of the early capture of Petersburg and Richmond are dissipated. Our people and armies with a wonderful elasticity of spirit have recovered from the effect of our reverses in the Valley of Virginia and in the Southwest. The campaign of 1864, the bloodiest by far since yet fought on the continent, bids fair to close without a particle of advantage to our enemies, if not with positive advantage to our arms.

Nobody has yet started and with sufficient care nobody will, during the coming season. But the end of this war and the return of peace seems still far from human vision. When it shall come, how it shall be raised, and with what body it shall come, are questions it is not in my power to answer. The dimming prospect we thought we saw in the spring and early summer seem to have vanished.

If it is a matter of sincere congratulation, however, that the good sense and conservatism of our people have rescued our State from the ruin of attempting to seek for it by separate action. Their unparalleled unanimity at the polls has put to rest all our apprehensions on that score, and satisfied our enemies and our friends that North Carolina will share neither the welfare nor the calamities of the Confederacy. A noble moral example has seldom been exhibited than that of our people in ratifying anew the pledged honor of their convention, after almost four years of such suffering and bloodshed as rarely happens to the lot of nations. Suffering men and women and children at home, and wearied and blood-stained soldiers in their ranks in the trenches at Petersburg, with oceans' vast crashing through their ranks as they cast their ballots, vied with each other in the noble task of upholding the honor of their State and the independence of their country. If I have ever maintained a constant and abiding faith in our ultimate triumph, I owe that faith, more than to saintly generals, great and gallant armies, ships of war or far famed cities, to that pure and unselfish patriotism which glows in the bosom of our people. In spite of all we see of the ways of human nature, the greed of gain, extortion and rapacity, selfishness, grinding of the poor, indifference to the agonies of our country, and all the ways of the heartless and the craven prophecies of the unpatriotic, I have yet, in my two years of close intercourse with the people of my native State ever found a pure and undying flame of that bright and glorious love of country, which can make the poor a widow or the humblest boy a kinsman of the Angels. And I have said, it cannot be that God will reject all this sacrifice and anguish as naught all this patient and long suffering because of the wickedness of some, that the little rills of patriotic love trickling from the mountain gorge, flowing upward through the plain and receiving its tributaries of blood in every valley, must yet reach the sea, in strength and volume mighty enough to bear in triumph the ark of Southern freedom which we are struggling to launch upon its bosom. Let us continue to sustain our government in all rightful and necessary powers, and give to that wonderful and victorious army every possible physical and moral support; let us while watching anxiously every visible and reasonable means of peace, each every plausible by path whose mile marks point to ruin and dishonor, let us accept the simple faith of the patriot in the justice of our cause which leads to salvation, and avoid the learned exception of the doubter which taketh hold on hell, and the result will be all that the friends of good government and human freedom could desire. A nation purified by sorrow, strengthened by suffering and wisdom from the bloody lessons of civil war, shall yet, I firmly trust in God, establish and perpetuate for their more fortunate children, a government rich in all the traditions of liberty and civilization.

ZEBULON B. VANCE.

The New York "Herald," of the 30th ult., has a most characteristic heraldic leader on "North Carolina for Peace," and the resolutions offered and voted for by the more notorious of the North Carolina members J. T. Leach. The article is unusually impudent and swaggering, even for the "Herald," and is only designed, of course, to aid and encourage the very few submissionists in and of the South, of whom North Carolina, notwithstanding what has been said, has not more than her relative share, and no State has of citizens a decent minority. Such essays and efforts and appeals of the "Herald," and kindred journals, should be read and examined occasionally by our statesmen, and generals, and leaders, but they should not be reprinted as fully and promptly as some Confederate journals generally reprint from Yankee papers. [Charleston Courier.]

THE FLORIDA AFFAIR. The Yankee tricks with regard to the Florida affair are not likely to avail anything. Information has been received, on undoubted authority, that Brazil has notified the United States that she will make the seizure a *casus belli* unless the crew and vessel are restored and ample apology made for the outrage. In this it is further understood that she will be supported by England and France.—Exchange.

FROM EASTERN CAROLINA. We learn that the enemy, some three hundred strong, landed from their gunboats in Chowan river, on Sunday last, and proceeded to Murfreesboro', in Hertford county, where they destroyed all of our commissary stores, and carried off a number of horses and mules.—Ral. Conservative.

NORTH CAROLINA ARGUS.

FRANK DARLEY, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

WADESBORO', N. C. THURSDAY DECEMBER 15, 1864.

Subscription—\$5.00 a year, in advance. Six months—\$3.00.

ADVERTISING—\$2.00 per square for first insertion, and \$1.75 for each subsequent insertion. Obituaries over five lines \$2.00 per square. [Ten lines make a square. Single advertisements of less than ten lines counted a square.]

TO THE PUBLIC.

The resignation of the commission of the undersigned having at last been accepted by the military authorities, he resumes connection with the Argus, and with some trepidation announces that he takes full charge of its editorial and publishing management. To many of you he is known as one of its publishers when its publication was resumed at this point in 1857. He was not much known as assisting editorially, yet editorial duty often devolved upon him until early in 1861, when he entered the service as a volunteer, in the first company that left the county.

In assuming the full charge of the paper the undersigned knows the responsibilities he takes upon himself and the difficulties he will have to contend with. He hopes, however, with the assistance of a generous public to overcome those difficulties in a measure; and in addition to your moral support he asks that you will use your influence to extend the circulation of the Argus, and to send to it those other means of support to a newspaper, advertising and jobwork. Give him these liberally, and you shall have what so many of you desire at this point—a paper.

To many, the Argus, owing to the very bad mail arrangements and facilities in this section, cannot be a news paper, while to a few, perhaps, it is. By untiring energy and industry we hope, however, to make it acceptable to all.

With politics in a party sense, during the troubles that are now upon us, the undersigned will have nothing to do. He knows but one party, if it so may be called, and that is—the South. And for Southern independence in its fullest sense, both from Northern domination and foreign thralldom in any shape or form, he shall ever contend. Our columns shall be always open, however, to all who may wish to discuss any questions agitating the public mind, or who may desire to lay before the public anything concerning the general welfare.

CONFEDERATE STATES SENATOR.

With pleasure we announce that our fellow-townsmen, Hon. T. S. Ashe, was on the 8th inst., elected by the Legislature, C. S. Senator, in place of Hon. Wm. T. Dorich, whose term expires on the 23d of February, 1866. The election of Mr. Ashe was altogether unexpected, as the place was not sought by him. In drawing him from his retirement, the Legislature has done well. We know of no one who is actuated by pure motives or a higher sense of duty, or filled with loftier aspirations for his State and his beloved South. He will be a worthy colleague of that other true Southern gentleman and statesman, who represents the Old North State of the floor of the higher House of Congress, the Hon. W. A. Graham, and like him, will command respect for all he may say or do.

The act of the Legislature in electing Mr. Ashe we accept as a pledge that that body, as occasion requires, will rise superior to the partyisms that some have attempted to infuse into its councils, and that in future we may trust its actions on all great national questions.

In the foregoing remarks we do not wish to be understood as making any invidious reflections against any of the gentlemen who were run with Mr. Ashe for the Senate. Mr. A. we know personally; the others we do not.

We have some indefinite information relative to a plot being discovered among the negroes in the upper edge of Richmond county and in Montgomery, in the neighborhood of Troy, having for its object the murdering of the whites, &c. The plot was discovered on the 4th inst., and the "rising" was to have taken place on Christmas eve. A large number of the negroes have been arrested, some of whom are confined in jail at Rockingham and some at Troy. Among the ring-leaders three guns and a lot of ammunition were found. Several white persons are implicated as instigators, but none of these have yet been arrested, so far as we have been able to learn.

Since the foregoing was put in type we have information leading us to believe the plot was more extensive than was at first supposed. Some of the negroes in their confessions say they were instigated to rise by deserters and Yankee prisoners who have made their escape from the pens about Florence, and who had made their way up into Richmond and Montgomery. Three of the negroes, ring-leaders, are up for summary execution.

We are happy to see, from Legislative proceedings, that Lieut. L. L. Polk, Congressman from this county, is at last in his seat. He comes direct from the army in the Valley of Virginia, in whose glorious achievements the past summer he has been an active participant.

Among other Confederate soldiers recently reported to have died at the Yankee prison at Elmira, New York, we notice the name of Jas. P. Parier, Co. A, 23d N. C. T.

That Arab of the Southern Press, the Chattahoochee Rebel, has again turned up, after more than a month's silence at Selma, Ala. It was last printed at Griffin, Ga.

FROM CO. B, 31st N. C. T. ON THE LINES NEAR RICHMOND, VA., December 2, 1864.

Dear Argus: We, as soldiers, are suffering considerably on account of short rations, bad clothes; no pay; but all these we could bear with much fortitude if we could get an occasional letter from our loved ones at home. This is a blessing we have been almost deprived of for the past month, especially those of our company who get their mail from Lilesville. Others whose letters are mailed at Morven or Pee Dee get their by every mail; but in vain the Lilesville boys look for every one comes for them. Now, don't understand me to be complaining of the P. O. at Lilesville, for I don't know who he is—in fact, we hardly know here now that there is such a place; we know that there once was; and that it was inhabited by a honorable set of men as ever lived. Let the P. M. there be who he may we don't believe there is anything wrong about him; but we do believe there is some one between here and there that intends to cut off our communication entirely. As for me I have no father or mother, wife or sweetheart there to write to me, but I have friends, and I believe they write to me—if they do or not, it's all the same to me. I also hear some who have wives there—some nice young wives—say they are due some three and some four letters from them, but none comes to hand. We are aware that the writ of habeas corpus once was, and is again about to be, suspended for the benefit of the "Tartucels," but we did not think they would suspend the mail also. We believe you will do anything in your power to oblige a soldier, and we know our Lilesville friends will; so if, between you, you will find out the reason no mail comes to us from that post office you will greatly oblige.

A TARNISH OF THE STRAIGHTEST SECT. [We give "Tarnish's" letter an insertion, with the hope that it will arrest the attention of some one in whose power it is to remove the difficulty of which he complains. Mr. S. E. Liles, the regular appointed postmaster at Lilesville, is with the Senior Reserves, doing active service in the field, with the prospect of remaining all the winter, and perhaps longer. If he cannot be released to come home to resume his duties as postmaster, and to discharge other important duties devolving upon him, we hope some one will be appointed to discharge the duties of the office who is free from all liability to military service.—Ed. Above.]

REPORTS FROM THE FIGHT IN TENNESSEE.

RESCUE, Ala., Dec. 4, via Tallahassee, Madison, and Doctortown, Dec. 5.—The following is a statement of Rev. Mr. Browning, just from the Army of Tennessee: A fight took place on the 20th ult., between Harpeth Creek and Franklin, in which the enemy was routed from his breastworks, losing 4,000 killed and wounded, and 6,000 prisoners. Cheatam's corps was principally engaged. The enemy are falling back to Murfreesboro'. Forrest is reported to be at Bentwater, between the enemy and Nashville.

[This is the fight in which the Yankees, as per their accounts published by us last week, claimed to have routed Hood, and killed and wounded from 5,000 to 6,000 of his men, and took 1,000 prisoners, the battle lasting until night. And yet, notwithstanding the Yankees claimed they had done all this they had fallen back or retreated eighteen miles by 8 o'clock next morning, within the fortifications of Nashville. Next later Yankee accounts in this week's paper, in which they virtually acknowledge themselves whipped.]

Summary of the Latest News.

The Legislature of Virginia assembled in Richmond on the 7th inst. Gov. Smith in his message recommends the arming of a portion of the slave population to be ready for the Spring campaign. He would employ them "to fight the negro force of the enemy, eye the Yankees themselves."

Through Yankee sources, the latest dispatch from Nashville is to the 8th. No change in the military situation reported. The destruction of "Rebel" property to facilitate the defence of Nashville was immense. Chattanooga and Bridgeport are safe. Several Federal gunboats attempted unsuccessfully on the night of the 7th to discharge our battery fourteen miles below Nashville, on the Cumberland river. Forrest is reported to have crossed the Cumberland, and the impression prevailed at Nashville that Hood was evacuating his lines, and had commenced a movement towards Kentucky.

Jas. Watson Webb, Yankee Minister to Brazil, has assured the Brazilian Government that the capture of the Florida was unauthorized by his Government, and that all the reparation which honor and justice can exact will be freely offered.

Lincoln, in his message to the Yankee Congress on the 6th inst., notices the continuance of the war with results which he regards as important. He refers to his election as an evidence of the purpose of the people of the "loyal States" to maintain the integrity of the Union. "On careful consideration it seems to him no attempt at negotiation with the insurgent leaders could result in good. They would accept nothing short of a severance of the Union, which he could not voluntarily yield. The issue can only be tried by war and be decided by victory; but the Southern people can re-accept Union, and the amnesty offered one year ago is still open to all on condition to make a free choice." He will not retract or modify his emancipation proclamation, and in stating a single condition of peace he means simply to say that war will cease on the part of the United States Government whenever it should have ceased on the part of those who began it. [An excellent opportunity is offered to several gentlemen of the Legislature, after this last pronouncement of old Abe, to eat dirt by continuing to offer peace resolutions, &c.]

Lt. Bayton, of the 12th Virginia cavalry, attacked two companies of the 21st New York cavalry at Millwood, Clark county, Valley of Virginia, on the 4th inst., killing and capturing 40 of the enemy, and bringing off 39 horses.

About noon of the 10th inst., the first division of the 2d corps, of Grant's army, supporting their cavalry, forced back our cavalry pickets on the Vaughan road, below Petersburg, and advanced towards Dinwiddie Court House. On the 11th, our cavalry, reinforced by infantry, drove the Yankees back across Hatcher's Run, capturing a few prisoners and re-establishing our lines.

The latest news from Europe represents Confederate loan as advancing, closing at 62.

It is reported that the Yankees recently sent a grand raiding party into Loudon and Fauquier counties, who destroyed many barns and houses, and burnt up much slaughtered meat, and drove off all the cattle and horses they could find, as retaliation, they allege, for the people of those counties taking care of Mosby.