

Commencement written by the Editor

Iredell Express.

STATESVILLE, Thursday, June 4, 1863.

The Commencement.

The Commencement exercises of the Confederate Female College closed on last Wednesday evening. Of the examination of the pupils we can say nothing; but judging from the reports of the young ladies, which were read before the public on Wednesday, we feel satisfied that they were as perfect in their studies during the session as could be wished.

On Tuesday night, at the Presbyterian Church, was delivered before the pupils of the College and an attentive audience, the Annual Sermon, by Rev. Dr. S. C. Pharr. We would be doing injustice to this distinguished divine to attempt an encomium on his brilliant and instructive discourse.

On Wednesday we had the pleasure of listening to the compositions read by the young ladies of the Graduating Class. They all possessed literary merit of the first order, but we must be excused for mentioning the Valedictory, by Miss Maggie V. McLaughlin, as being superior in composition and delivery, to any that we have heard for many a day.

Not as it should be. The people of the South united in the prosecution of this war? Are the people of North Carolina united in the prosecution of this war? Are the people of Iredell County, and sundry adjoining counties, united in a determined spirit for the prosecution of this war, this wicked war which Lincoln has waged against us? We ask the question in a spirit of misgiving, when we hear of men who are using all their influence to excite prejudice not only against the Government, but against some of the best of our Generals in the field, endeavoring to depreciate the noble cause of the country.

Commissioners of Appraisement. The Commissioners of Appraisement for the State of North Carolina, acting under the Improvement Law of the last Congress, have published the rates of compensation to the owners of property, for the ensuing sixty days. The following are a portion of the rates enumerated and prices in this District: No. 3: Corn, \$18 per barrel; Bacon, 50 cts per pound; Wheat, \$5 per bushel; Flour, \$25 per barrel; Lard, \$5 cts per pound; Sugar, 60 cts per pound; Salt, \$12 per bushel; Paper Leather \$2.50 per pound; Sole Leather, \$2 per pound; Molasses, \$4 per gallon; Whisky and Brandy, \$9 per gallon; Iron, pound and plate, \$350 per ton.

Crop Prospects. During a flying visit through South Carolina and Georgia, to Columbus, we are pleased to state that according to observation the crop prospects in these States is most promising. Wheat was being harvested, also oats, and corn appears remarkably fine, being tall and knee high. We saw very little cotton growing in the fields, and were told that very little had been planted. The quantity of old corn on hand is large for this season of the year, and the price was ruling at \$1.50 to \$2.50 per bushel, according to distance from market. Planters were willing to make engagements of new wheat at \$2 per bushel.

Simonton House. This large and commodious Hotel, located in the center of business, and affording a most desirable and comfortable home for families, has been re-opened under the management of Mr. M. E. Hyams, lessee. Statesville is one of the most healthful and desirable locations for Summer residence in the State—in full view of the grand mountain scenery of North Carolina—and Mr. Hyams is a landlord who will spare no pains to make his guests comfortable and render his Hotel one of the most popular in Western North Carolina.

The powder mill, located near Charlotte, was blown up on Saturday week last, and four men instantly killed and one mortally wounded. The accident is supposed to have been caused by one of the men knocking the powder off the stones with a copper hammer. The mill house was entirely destroyed, but the principal portion of the machinery is unharmed. There was about 700 pounds of powder in the mill at the time of the explosion.

Dr. Gibbs, the able Editor of the Carolinaian, published at Columbia, S. C., will accept thanks for sending us an exchange of his valuable paper for our weekly, without extra charge.

Arrival of Vallandigham at Shelbyville. SHELBYSVILLE, May 25.—Mr. Vallandigham has just arrived. He was brought to our lines by flag of truce, but the commander of the outposts refused to recognize it for any such purpose as a claim of right to send any one through our lines by authority. The Federals becoming alarmed, retired, leaving Mr. Vallandigham with his baggage upon the neutral ground. When our officers approached him, he proposed delivering himself as a prisoner of war. This was declined, inasmuch as he was not a soldier in the service of the United States. Upon learning his name and situation, he was, however, received as an exile banished from his State, and as such tendered the hospitality of the country as any foreigner, seeking a refuge or banished from his home for opinion sake. He was then received by Gen. Martin and escorted to his headquarters without any demonstration; there he was received by Col. J. Stoddard Johnson, of Gen'l Bragg's staff, and by him conveyed in a carriage to Shelbyville, where comfortable quarters were provided. There was in the whole no demonstration, but everywhere, as he passed the troops who had heard of his coming, they greeted him kindly and with silent tokens of sympathy and respect.

Mr. Vallandigham is cheerful, and seems to breathe freer on escaping from the Lincoln despotism. He very properly desires to avoid all public demonstration, and only asks that he may find a quiet refuge in our midst, until such time as the voice of his people, relieved from despotic influence, shall call him again to their midst. He seems fully to realize the embarrassment of his position, and will, beyond doubt, be equal to its responsibilities. A dignified retirement and seclusion from all public matters, will to the minds of all proper persons, as doubtless his own, be the best course for him to pursue.

In stature, Mr. Vallandigham is about five feet eleven inches, with dark hair and slight whiskers extending under the chin, but no moustache. His expression is very agreeable, and his manners affable and pleasant; in fact, attractive, while not obtrusive. Correspondence Chattanooga Rebel.

Later from the West. Mobile, May 23.—A special dispatch from the reporter for the Advertiser & Register, dated Jackson, 27th instant, says: "Reports from below states that Banks has crossed his army at Bayou Sara. Federal deserters confirm the report that great courage occurred during the engagement before Vicksburg. Grant sent a flag yesterday about the sick and wounded. Pemberton is burning Tar and using other disinfectants to save his troops from the effects of the stench caused by the Federal dead lying in front of our works. The slaughter of the Federals is far greater than during any battle since the war commenced. The Mississippi states that two gunboats were sunk at Vicksburg during a recent engagement. The Mississippi of Tuesday evening contains a report of Saturday's battle at Vicksburg, which represents it to have been the most stubborn of the war."

News has been received from Memphis at Grenada, and believed at Memphis, that Helena has been recaptured by the Confederates. Afterwards a telegram was received from Oxford at Grenada, which says Helena was captured on Monday last. A man from the river who has reached Canton says he read a dispatch directed to Col. Furgerson, that Marmaduke had retaken Helena, and hanged a regiment of negroes (340) with the Yankee officers. The Quartermaster at Canton says positively that the statement may be relied on.

Yankee gunboats are reported to have arrived at Yazoo city.

From Middle Tennessee. Our pickets are almost within cannon shot of Murfreesboro', but an engagement with the enemy seems less probable than it has seemed for some time. Some say that Bragg will advance, and some say he won't. The same as to Rosencranz. In fact, since Rosencranz—the dog—has issued such stringent orders in regard to our ladies, saying they shall not pass from Louisville to Nashville, or to Murfreesboro', or within the lines of his department—this leads some to think he intends to commence a forward movement for the purpose of "pulverizing" the South. As he stands now, he certainly is defeated, for his business is to advance. That's what he came for—to crush the rebellion. But for months he has stood behind his fortifications, while in his front, and all over the country down here, the rebellion waxes more bitter still.

It is reported to us, by a gentleman just from the enemy's lines, that Rosencranz' force has been greatly diminished by the sending of troops to Grant and that he has no idea of advancing. His excuse last winter was the roads. Surely the way is open now, and the roads are good. But he might meet with some obstacles worse than bad roads and high water courses. We don't consider a fight imminent.—Winchester (Tenn.) Bulletin 23d.

From Virginia. Of affairs on the Rappahannock the Enquirer, of Friday, says: On the Rappahannock all is quiet as regards a general movement of troops. The enemy are massing large bodies of cavalry opposite our forces stationed near Culpepper Court House, and seem to be in some state of alarm and perturbation, from a rumor that we have been gathering our troops together at the above mentioned point.—There has, however, been no bold skirmishing.

The Federals last week made a raid down the Rappahannock river into Westmoreland and Northumberland counties, and destroyed a good deal of property. They established headquarters at a place called Union Village. They stated that they had fourteen regiments of cavalry, seven of which went to Lancaster. They carried off between eight and nine hundred horses, and one hundred and thirty wagons loaded of negroes, besides those who were mounted on stolen horses. The wagons were also stolen. They burned houses, barns, and outlying crop of last year.

Of the operations of the enemy's force at West Point the same paper has the following: The Yankees in the vicinity of West Point are committing great depredations and outrages. They have burned mills, dwelling houses and barns in King and Queen county, as well as in Gloucester and Matthews.

In the latter county, near the line of Gloucester, about a dozen of the wretches committed the most shameful and brutal outrages upon the person of Miss Gray, a young lady of high respectability. The injuries to her person were so great that it was feared she would die.

Residents in that section of the country say that a regiment of cavalry would effectually check these depredations. If the men of the country would form themselves into guerrilla parties, they could clear the country in a week.

Some days ago our troops took down below West Point two pieces of artillery, and fired into a transport, disabling it and causing great commotion aboard. Shortly after the departure of our artillery, the Yankees landed troops from two gunboats, and burned three dwelling houses with all the out buildings.

Death of a Brave Man. We mentioned in yesterday's Express, that Lieut. Gambrell, of Mississippi, a Confederate scout, was killed on Sunday last, about ten miles from the city. A gentleman just from Isle of Wight county, gives us the particulars of Lieut. Gambrell's death. They stamp him one of the bravest men this war has produced. Lt. G. was overhauled near Barham's Cross Roads, Isle of Wight county, by twenty-one of the enemy, who immediately demanded a surrender. He instantly replied, "I never have surrendered, and never intend to," at the same time drawing his revolver and emptying the barrels of each, before he fell.—Seven of the enemy were killed and two wounded in the brief space of four minutes, when the Lieutenant fell mortally wounded. The survivors then repaired to the house of Mrs. Ely, in the immediate vicinity, and told her that a particular friend of hers was lying dead in the road a short distance off. Upon asking his name, and being told that it was Lieut. Gambrell, Mrs. Ely replied "that she would bury him if it cost her her life." "You ought to," rejoined the Yankee, "for a braver man never lived," and they then related to Mrs. Ely the particulars of his death and how desperately he defended himself. A Lieutenant who commanded the gang, said to Mrs. E. that he thought at one time that Gambrell would have killed him, but added, had he done so, it would have costed his friends to know that he met death at the hands of as brave a man as ever breathed.

True to her pledge, Mrs. Ely procured a cart, and calling upon a couple of ladies in the neighborhood, secured the body, washed it, and with her own hands, assisted by her lady friends, gave the body of Lieut. G. sepulture.—Petersburg Express.

A Box of Blacking. A box of blacking, a brush and a little imp of a darkey in a barber shop, is an establishment in itself, good will and fixtures. To look at the three sable partners, blacking, brush and a negro, one would not see it; but let us make a calculation. A box of blacking costs two and a half dollars and a brush one dollar. The same will polish about seventy pair of boots or shoes, for which fifty cents per pair are charged, making about thirty-five dollars, or thirty dollars, clear gain on a box of blacking that "once on a time" cost just ten cents. No wonder the barbers are getting jealous of the business of their boot blacks, and want to incorporate it into their business.

The above is equal to a man who, in this town, out of the proceeds of a barrel of whiskey and a few buckets of James river water, purchased himself a brick house, a horse and buggy, and got married on the balance. Rich. Examiner.

From the United States. Advice from New York, dated the 22d instant, says: The Democratic State Mass meeting, held at Indianapolis, (Ohio) on the 19th instant, was very largely attended. Hon. D. W. Voorhees was made President. A good deal of excitement prevailed. During the day some forty or fifty arrests were made of persons for carrying concealed weapons and shouting for Jeff. Davis, &c.

Speeches, principally in opposition to the war measures of the administration, were delivered. At three p. m. resolutions were introduced and hurriedly passed amid great confusion, after which the meeting adjourned sine die. The delegates and others left the city at night on several trains.

The excursionists commenced firing on the soldiers, when the home military authorities stopped the trains and searched the passengers. About five hundred revolvers were taken, and a number of arrests were made. Vallandigham has been conveyed to Fort Warren.

The Syracuse Courier says Mr. Vallandigham has become lunatic.—The office of the Monitor, a Democratic newspaper published at Huntingdon, Pa., has been destroyed by a mob.

It is reported that the Alabama is blockaded in the Bay at Martinique.

Blockade Running. The following is from the Charleston Mercury of the 21st: The steamers Margaret and Jessie, Capt. Wilson, Ella and Anna, Capt. Carlin, and Kate, Capt. Stubbs, arrived here yesterday from Nassau with valuable cargoes.

The steamer Gladiator, from Liverpool, had arrived at Nassau. The Ella and Anna and Kate, while coming up to this Bar, were fired at by the Yankee blockaders.

The Wilmington Journal of Tuesday evening says: The steamer Eugene arrived here yesterday from England via Bermuda, loaded on Government account. She is a handsome vessel. Also the steamer Emma, from Nassau, got in night before last, with an assorted cargo on private account.

Jayhawk Montgomery. A telegraph some time since announced the death of this notorious scoundrel, but the particulars we do not recollect to have seen before we find them in the Arkansas Democrat, of April 22d. It seems that a Col. Davis and Montgomery, crossed over from Matamoros, Mexico, to Brownsville, Texas, and enticed away some Confederate soldiers, who, for \$50, went over and swore to the Yankees, a boat being there to take them to New Orleans. A party of Confederates went down the river on this side crossed over and took Davis and Montgomery prisoners, killing and capturing about a dozen of the deserters.—Davis was sent a prisoner to Brownsville, but Montgomery up a tree on the end of a rope. The Mexicans made a great fuss, but soon cooled down.

The Knoxville (Tenn.) Register, upon information furnished by a returned prisoner, who, after his capture was taken to Murfreesboro', Nashville, Louisville, and thence by way of Baltimore to City Point, states: That the people of the Northwest are all resolved to resist the conscription Act of the Federal Congress, even to blood. And that many of them assert positively they will not pay the three hundred dollars in lieu of service.

All are very desirous of peace and a very large majority concur in the object for which Lincoln and his Administration are now continuing the war—the abolition of slavery.

Some of our returned prisoners inform us that they have understood that there are at least one hundred and sixty thousand men in the Northwest enrolled to resist the conscription Act, and of these some fifty thousand are well armed and determined to resist any attempt to enforce the conscription law of the Federal Congress.

To Conscripts. Judge Pearson, of this State, having decided that parties furnishing substitutes over thirty-five years, when the conscription only extended to that age, do not become liable themselves on account of their substitutes becoming liable under a subsequent call, we are authorized to state that the Confederate authorities do not regard Judge Pearson's opinion as authority, and that persons who have obtained substitutes, but subsequently become liable through the liability of the substitutes, will be required either to enter the army or procure new substitutes over the age of the present call.—Wilmington Journal.

Gen. Van Dorn's Division. It is stated that Gen. Forrest has been ordered to take command of Van Dorn's division. He assumes command temporarily until a permanent appointment is made, Forrest preferring to command his old brigade in person without any restrictions thrown around him in the shape of "orders." He would be a worthy successor to Van Dorn, and to one doubts that he would, by his wonderful energy and tact, add additional laurels to wreaths that cover Gen. Forrest and staff arrived at Shelbyville, Tenn., on the 14th instant.

It that the Legislature intended that they should perform military duty. I will state further that Justices of the Peace and persons owning twenty negroes are not exempt from Militia duty. Men detailed by the Confederate Government are exempt, because they are still regarded as soldiers, and are liable to be ordered into active service at any time.

I am Colonel, very respectfully, DAN'L G. FOWLE, Adj't Gen. To Col. NATHAN IVY, 28th Reg. N. C. Militia.

Grant's Base of Supplies. This is given in a letter of a correspondent of the New York Times, of the 11th dated "Opposite Grand Gulf, La., April 29, 1863," as follows: The route from Milliken's Bend to this point, as constructed by our forces, is in the highest degree complimentary to their ingenuity and perseverance.

The entire distance, by land, is about sixty miles, and for the greater part of its length it has been constructed across swamps that, at first sight, would seem impassable for anything save alligators, or other amphibious denizens of the country. Mile after mile of timber has been chopped down to admit the passage of wagons, corduroy roads have been thrown across morasses of a seemingly endless width; wide, swift bayous have been bridged, causeways thrown up, heights leveled, and in short a labor performed whose equal as to magnitude and difficulty, has scarcely been performed during this war.

As may generally be known, the object of constructing this route was to enable us to pass around Vicksburg with a view of reaching it from some point below. All the other approaches of Vicksburg have been experimented upon—last fall Grant tried them on the east, and during the last six months Sherman, Grant, Porter, Ross and others have tested them from the northwest—in fact from every imaginable point of the compass, save the one upon which we are moving. So far the armor of Vicksburg has been found proof—in no place have we been able to find a joint.

Down this corduroy road then ferried across the Mississippi to Grand Gulf and then up the Big Black as far as navigable, and thence by wagon, must all the immense supplies for so large an army as Grant's be transported. The necessity for a short campaign need not be enlarged upon.

Jackson and Lee. The Richmond Enquirer, of the 14th inst., contains a lengthy communication giving various items and incidents connected with the late battles on the Rappahannock, from which we take the following: The messenger who carried General Lee intelligence of the severe misfortune (the wounding of General Jackson) tells me that he found the General on a bed of straw, about four o'clock in the morning, and that when told of what had occurred, his words were these: "Thank God it is no worse; God be praised that he is still alive;" and that he further said: "Any victory is a dear one that deprives us of the services of Jackson, even for a short time." Upon the informant mentioning that he believed it was General Jackson's intention to have pressed them on Sunday, had he not have fallen, General Lee quietly said: "These people shall be pressed to-day," at the same time rising about 4 a. m. Hastily dressing and partaking of his simple fare of ham and cracker, he sallied forth, I hear unattended, and made that Sabbath a blessed day for our cause, even though a Jackson had fallen among its leaders.

As every incident connected with these two great men must interest the reader, I will mention, as quite current, that when General Jackson received the letter which General Lee sent him on Sunday morning, bursting into tears he said, "far better for the Confederacy that ten Jacksons should have fallen than one Lee."

The United States and Russia. The particulars of the great alliance proposed to be formed by Russia with the United States have leaked out in Federalism. According to statements of the matter now made, it appears that the Czar of Russia proposed to furnish the Federal Government men and money to crush the rebellion with, provided she would mortgage all lands North of the Ohio River to him, assigning for his reason for not taking the territory of the South, that the people of the South would suffer total annihilation before they would submit, and there would be nothing to gain by the conquest; that the Federal Government would be exhausted, and her bonds would be worth nothing. This proposition did not meet with any favor with Old Abe and his advisers; and Mr. Clay for entertaining it has been sent to a new field to exercise his great persuasive powers. A complete history of the diplomatic schemes of Lincoln's administration would make a decidedly spicy book. Our Western scow boatman would appear in a more ridiculous light than he did when he rushed through Baltimore with his Scotch cap and plaid cloak.

Battle of Baker's Creek. On Saturday, 16th, the Federals having been marching Big Black bridge by way of Edwards' Depot, General Pemberton advanced a heavy force over on this side of the river, about six miles, and engaged the enemy on Baker's Bluff. Here a very heavy battle was fought, very few particulars of which are known. It is known that Pemberton had advantage of the ground—that he was successful until Grant reached the field with reinforcements from Jackson. Pemberton did not fight half his forces. Gen. Lloyd Tilghman's division was known to have been engaged. He was killed. Tilghman commanded at Fort Henry, and had the alternative of escaping and losing his army, or saving his army and being captured himself. He chose the latter alternative. A few days after, Buckner, at Donelson, had the alternative of escaping and losing his army, or sharing its fate in captivity. He shared its fate. Both were heroes and noble examples of Kentucky chivalry: Loring, who commanded our left wing, did not engage until late, when he felt himself surrounded by the enemy in force.

He charged and cut his way through their lines, and marched on Crystal Springs, twenty-eight miles South of Jackson. After getting out, it is said he encountered a supply train of Grant's, of 150 wagons, which he destroyed. It is also reported that he lost all of his artillery, which he was compelled to abandon, but lost few men. Our loss, as estimated by Gen. Pemberton, is said to be 3,000 and the enemy's at three times that number. Knowing the position of the ground, the disproportion of the loss of the two armies is quite a reasonable estimate, if we lost 3,000 men. Pemberton whipped the forces he was fighting, and when Grant came up retired behind his entrenchments, expecting, it is said, a general attack from Grant, which was not made. Loring is very highly extolled for his part in the fight. I know of no more particulars.

Yesterday evening, the enemy sent in a flag of truce, for his principal Surgeon, who had been left here in charge of the Federal wounded. From the enemy we learn that their loss in the battle of Baker's Creek was 6,000 killed and wounded, and they supposed our loss to be as great. They claim to have captured six pieces of artillery. This may be true—that of Loring's. They say Pemberton fell back to the Big Black, crossed the river, and burnt the bridge. They claim to have taken 700 prisoners.—We have no news of fighting to date. Let us hope to obtain. Affairs are beginning to look better, and I sincerely hope the worst has passed. The storm has been a long time gathering, and our entrenchments have not yet been attacked; all has been so far quiet fighting. Vicksburg has not yet been shaken. Grant's army above and below is estimated at 120,000 men; and now, to make due allowances for casualties, I think that he can hardly bring more than 80,000 men into the field.—Correspondence of the Mobile Advertiser.

Interesting to Foreigners and those who have furnished Substitutes. MAY 21st, 1863. Gen. D. G. Fowle—Dear Sir: Will you be so good as to answer the following questions?

1st. Have I the right to place men in the militia to guard the bridges who have furnished substitutes in the army, &c.?

2d. Have I the right to place Jews, Germans, Dutch, in a word, foreigners, (who live among us making money) in the militia as bridge guard, who claim to be exempt from all duties of the country, upon the ground that they are not naturalized, &c.?

By answering the above you will confer a favor, &c. Respectfully yours, N. IVY, Lt. Col. 28th Reg't N. C. M.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT N. C. ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE, MILITIA, Raleigh, May 25th. Colonel:—Your communication making inquiry as to the liability of "foreigners and person who have placed substitutes in the Confederate army," to military duty has been received.

By the 70th Chapter, Sec. 1. Revised Code, no one is subject to Militia duty unless he is a citizen of the State or of the "United States,"—but at the session of the General Assembly held in 1860-'61 the law was so amended, as to embrace "all free white males and apprentices," between certain ages "who reside in the State," &c. It is clear that foreigners would not be embraced under the term "Citizen," but it is equally clear, that they are "residents," and are embraced under the act of 1860-'61. They are therefore liable. As to those who have placed substitutes in the Confederate army, I am not aware of any law by which they are exempt from military duty. The late Legislature passed an "Act to amend an Act entitled Militia." In section 3d the Legislature enumerates the classes of persons which it was their intention to exempt. Those furnishing substitutes are not enumerated. We must therefore take