CORRESPONDENCE.

EDUCATION AND THE CHURCH.

No. 4.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE PROTESTANT.

SIR,—In my last I showed that there is nothing in the teaching of the Church inimical to the cultivation of the mind. In the present and subsequent letters I purpose to give some facts relative to what the much abused Popes, and the Roman Catholic Church generally, have done for education.

No man, who is acquainted with the history of letters, can deny that the Church has been at all times the zealous friend of education, and has possessed, in all ages, men illustrious for their scientific and literary acquirements; and that the men who, during the middle ages, preserved the Bible and the works of Greek and Roman literature from utter annihilation, were Catholic clergymen.

It is almost impossible for us, at the present day, to form an adequate idea of all the difficulties with which our forefathers had to contend in matters appertaining to education. We should remember that on the breaking up of the Roman Empire, all the sources of learning were almost wholly destroyed. The barbarians of the North, one after another, broke in upon the doomed empire, destroying every thing before them with fire and sword. Franks and Goths, Vandals and Alans, Huns and Lombards, Danes and Normans, swept like torrents over the most beautiful provinces of Europe, "massacring the inhabitants, and sweeping away in their resistless course almost all the landmarks of civilization, and involving in a common ruin the most splendid monuments of ancient genius and wisdom." This is an important fact which we should remember when examining what the Popes and the "lazy monks" have done for learning. Another fact which we must not forget is, that the art of printing was not invented till the fifteenth century, and consequently that the innumerable facilities for multiplying books which that invention has afforded were unknown before that time. The method of producing copies of books, which existed previous to the date mentioned, was to transcribe them with the pen; and to form an idea of the immense labor connected with this manner of multiplying books, we have only to consider that an expert copyist would have to be very busily engaged for at least ten months to transcribe one single copy of the Bible! Books were then, as a matter of course, scarce and exceedingly dear. Remembering these facts, we will now proceed to consider how libraries were formed in the face of these great difficulties.

For the preservation of the treasures of science and literature, we are much indebted to the "lazy monks of the dark ages," whom certain gentlemen often misrepresent and calumniate in no measured terms. "When all was trouble and turmoil and confusion in society; when the arts of peace and the refinements of literature were treated with disdain by the barbarians, the much abused monasteries became the places where the sacred flame of learning was kept alive and flourished. It was in these retreats of prayer that men, free from the bustle and turmoil of the world, betook themselves to the study of the remains of ancient genius, and labored indefatigably to raise men from that state of ignorance which was the inevitable consequence of the prolonged and destructive strife that followed the dismemberment of the Roman Empire." To prove this I shall adduce abundant and irrefragable testimony.

Every monastery had a scriptorium, or hall, set apart for copying books, and all the monastic orders had copyists among their inmates. The monks of St. Martin of Tours had no other manual labor than that of copying. (See Sulpit Sev. vita S. Mar.) St. Ferreol laid down this rule for his monks:—"Paginam pingat digito, qui terram non proscindit aratro:" "let him paint the page with his hand who does not cultivate the earth with the plough." The younger monks were not always selected for this duty; sometimes those of greater age and celebrity, such as Alcuin and Dunstan, were chosen. Yes, even St. Dunston was occupied at this "monkish" business, and it is not improbable that had he been disturbed from his work by the intrusion of the devil vainly endeavouring to conceal his cloven feet under the garb of an "Onlooker," he would have wrung the "olfactory organ" of his sable majesty in such a manner as to cause him to "back out" in a trice, and bray as loud at least as a stupid "assy" does when receiving a *disagreeable currying*.

The monks were not mere blind copyists; they also collated the manuscripts which they were transcribing. Even in the sixth century, a monk of the monastery of Mesmin, near Orleans, arranged and collated the books of the monastic library. (See Petil Radel, Bibliotheq. p. 46.) Charlemagne employed Alcuin in the ninth century to collate manuscripts of the Bible, and he devoted some of his own time to the comparing of various manuscripts of the four Gospels. Lupus, abbot of Ferrieres, employed his leisure hours in transcribing and collating the manuscripts of his monastery. He mentions Sallust and other classical works on which he was thus laboring. In his letters he thanks Ansbald, abbot of Prum, for a copy of Cicero's Epistles, and Adalpard for a revised copy of Macrobius. (See Epist. ad Regimbert, 104, and Spal. Mis.) Throughout the whole period of the middle ages, Italy was the centre of literature, as well as the grand repository of books. The zeal of the Roman Pontiffs for the diffusion of learning, and for the distribution of books through the Christian world, cannot be sufficiently appreciated and admired. St. Gregory the Great was repeatedly written to on this subject from Gaul, and even from Alexandria, (S. Greg. Epist. xi. 56.) St. Martin I. received petitions for books from Belgium and from Spain. (Bar. Annal. ad Ann. 649). Pope Paul I. was asked by Pepin for Greek works, to be placed in the library of St. Dennis: among them were Aristotle, a treatise on Geometry, and many others. Gerbert wrote no fewer than thirteen epistles, some of them to Popes, asking for books. (Ep. 130, et alise.) Among the works which he most desired were "Mamilius de Astronomia," "Victorinus de Rhetorica" and those of Lupitus of Barcelona. (See Spal. Mis.)

"Religion and literature were always cultivated together; the library grew up with the school under the shadow of the Church." There were extensive libraries connected with the cathedrals of Hamburg, Bamberg, Cologne, Paderborn, &c., in Germany, and with many of the cathedrals in England. (Heeren, opp. I. 65.) The library of Spanheim contained two thousand volumes, in the fifteenth century; that of Novalaise contained, in the tenth century, more than six thousand books, (See Eugenii de Levis, Anecdota Sacra, praef. XXVIII.)

The great Cassiodorus who, in his ninety-third year, wrote in his cloister of Virarium a special treatise on orthography, bequeathed his library, which he had collected with immense labor, to the Solitaries, knowing "that among them alone could the faint rays of science be gathered together, increase, and form a great light to enlighten the nations." St. Bennet Biscop, who founded the famous abbey of Weremouth in England, traversed Europe no fewer than five times, in order to collect books for the library of his monastery. The Venerable Bede tells us that, by means of these peregrinations, "he brought into England an almost innumerable quantity of books of every kind."

The abbot of the monastery of Beaugency said in the twelfth century—"Libraries are as essential to monasteries as armories are to armies in time of war." Towards the close of the fifteenth century Trithemius collected two thousand volumes of valuable manuscripts. In his learned chronicles of the abbeys of Spanheim and Hirscheau, he shows how much we are indebted to the monks for the preservation of ancient learning. Leland, the librarian of Henry VIII., testifies that there were one thousand seven hundred manuscripts in the abbey of Peterborough. He also states that the library of the Franciscans in London was one hundred and twenty-nine feet long and thirty-one feet broad, and that it was "well filled with books." (See Spal. Mis.)

Not only monks, but nuns also, were engaged in the laborious occupation of transcribing books to supply the numerous libraries which were formed in all directions. In the fifth century, St. Melania, the Younger, is praised by her biographer for the exactness, beauty and rapidity of her writing: the same may be said of St. Cæsaria, (Mar. Acta Ord, S. Ben. Tom. 1. p. 668 *et seq.*) In the eighth century St. Boniface, writing to an abbess, prays her to copy in golden letters the Epistle of St. Peter, (2 Epist. 28.) S. S. Hanilda and Renilda, two Belgian abbesses of the ninth century, employed much of their time in transcribing manuscripts. Diomedis, who lived in the eleventh century, "wrote with her own hands, in most beautiful and legible characters," says a monk of Wessobrum in Bavaria, "many volumes both for divine service and for the public library of the monastery." It may here be remarked that the art of writing with golden and silver ink, now disused if not wholly lost, was common in the "dark" ages. "Who that has visited the ancient libraries has not admired the beautiful penmanship, the tasty marginal decorations, and the splendid pictorial illustrations of many of the old illuminated manuscripts? In many of these exquisite ornaments the delicate hand of woman is readily traced."

"The diligence with which the Popes gathered books for the promotion of sacred studies, is truly admirable. From the number of quotations in the letter of Leo the Great to Leo Augustus, we perceive that there must have been a large collection of the writings of the Fathers at his command. St. Hilary enriched the Lateran palace with two libraries. Stephen V. towards the close of the ninth century, gave books to the library of St. Paul's. From a letter of Lupus, abbot of Ferrieres, to Benedict III., it is seen that Rome was considered a good place to obtain rare and valuable books. The abbot asks the Pope to send him a portion of the commentary of St. Jerome on the Prophet Jeremiah, which was wanting in the libraries of France; as also the books of Cicero de Oratore, the twelve books of the institutes of Quintilian, and the commentary of Donatus on the comedies of Terentius. From this request it appears that the monks of the ninth century could relish the beauties of the classical authors, and that the Pontiff was thought likely to afford facilities for studying them. Gerbert, who was afterwards Pope, at the close of the following age, in a letter to a friend, assures him that the desire of books was great in every city of Italy, and that a large number of persons were employed in transcribing. Victor III., when abbot of Monte Cassino, occupied his monks in this useful labor, and sought after rare books to add them to his collection," (Kenrick.)

The Vatican library, which is the most famous in the world for old manuscripts, is the result of the efforts of successive Popes, from the time of St. Hilary, who founded it in the sixth century. "At present the Vatican library contains 3,686 Greek, 18,108 Latin, 726 Hebrew, 787 Arabic, 65 Persian, 64 Turkish, 459 Syriac, 71 Ethiopian, 18 Sclavonic, 22 Indian, 10 Chinese, 80 Coptic, 13 Armenian, and 2 Georgian manuscripts, amounting in all to 24,111, the finest collection in the world; which, with 25,383 duplicates, and 100,000 printed volumes, make a total of 149,494 volumes" (Rome, An. and Mod. by V, Rev. J. Donovan, vol. 2. p. 491.)

To the evidence of the original documents, to which I have referred, I will add the strong and favorable testimony of the most respectable Protestant authorities—testimony which will be rather disagreeable to those gentlemen who labor to advance Christianity and Literature by representing the Catholic Church as holding that "Ignorance is the mother of devotion," and testimony which will induce those whose credulity has been too long imposed on to entertain no very high esteem for the individuals who have been exhausting the category of their strongest and vilest epithets in abusing the Popes and the monks of the "dark ages," and who have labored incessantly to instil into their minds the most unjust and unchristian prejudices against their Catholic neighbours.

Mrs. Jameson, a Protestant authoress of our day, says:—"Before the invention of printing every Benedictine Abbey had its own library, and its 'scriptorium,' or writing chamber, where silent monks were employed from day to day, from month to month, in making transcripts of valuable works, PARTICULARLY OF THE SCRIPTURES, (read this, O ye defamers of the "monks," ye who in the face of history, accuse the Church of having ever been opposed to the diffusion of God's holy word.) "Not only do we owe them the multiplication and diffusion of copies of the Holy Scriptures, but we are indebted to them for the preservation of many classical remains of inestimable value, for instance, of the whole or the greater portion of the works of Pliny, Sallust and Cicero. They were the fathers of Gothic architecture, they were the earliest illuminators and limners; and to crown their deservings under this head, the inventor of the gamut, and the first who instituted a school of music, was a Benedictine monk, Guido d'Arezzo." She says further that the Benedictines were "the first agriculturists who brought intellectual resources, calculation and science to bear on the cultivation of the soil; to whom we owe experimental farming and gardening, and the introduction of a variety of new vegetables, fruits, &c. M. Guizot (one of the most illustrious and learned Protestants in France) styles the Benedictines "les defricheurs de l' Europe," (the clearers of Europe), wherever they carried the cross they carried the plough. * * Sir James Stephen thus sums up their highest claims upon the gratitude of succeeding times: 'The greatness of the Benedictines did not, however, consist either in their agricultural skill, their prodigies of architecture, or their PRICELESS LIBRARIES, but in their parentage of countless men and women illustrious for active piety, for wisdom in the government of mankind, for PROFOUND LEARNING, and for that contemplative spirit which discovers, within the soul itself, things beyond the limits of the perceptible creation.' (Essays I. 371). The annalists of the Benedictine order proudly reckon up the worthies it has produced since its foundation in 529, viz. 40 popes, 200 cardinals, 50 patriarchs, 1600 archbishops, 4600 bishops, and 3600 canonized saints. It is a more legitimate source of pride that by their order were either laid or preserved the foundations of all the eminent schools of learning of modern Europe," (Leg. of Mod. Ord. 2nd Ed. London, 1852, pp. 3, 4 and 5.) If you desire to peruse this work I shall be happy to give you the loan of it.

The next testimony which I shall adduce is that of a distinguished Protestant Clergyman, the Rev. S. R. Maitland, D. D. F. R. S. & F. S. A., sometime librarian to the late Archbishop of Canterbury and Keeper of the MSS. at Lambeth. This gentleman studied in a special manner the history of the middle ages; and his testimony, coming as it does from an enemy of the Catholic Church, is certainly of the greatest weight and importance. This Protestant author says:—"It is quite impossible to touch the subject of MONASTICISM without rubbing off some of the dirt which has been heaped upon it. It is impossible to get even a superficial knowledge of the mediæval history of Europe, without seeing how greatly the world of that period was indebted to the Monastic Orders; and feeling whether they were good or bad in other matters. Monasteries were beyond all price in those days of misrule and turbulence, as places where (it may be imperfectly, yet better than elsewhere) God was worshipped—as a quiet and religious refuge for helpless infancy and old age, a shelter of respectful sympathy for the orphan maiden and the desolate widow—as central points whence agriculture was to spread over bleak hills, and barren downs, and marshy plains, and deal bread to millions perishing with hunger and its pestilential train—as repositories of the learning which then was, and well-springs for the learning which was to be—as nurseries of art and science, giving the stimulus, the means, and the reward to invention, and aggregating around them every head that could devise, and every hand that could execute—as the nucleus of the city which in after-days of pride should crown its palaces and bulwarks with the towering cross of its Cathedral."

"This, I think, no man can deny. I believe it is true, and I love to think of it. I hope that I see the good hand of God in it, and the visible trace of his mercy that is over all his works. But if it is only a dream, however grateful, I shall be glad to be awakened from it; not, indeed, by the yelling of illiterate agitators, but by a quiet and sober proof that I have misunderstood the matter. In the meantime, let me thankfully believe that thousands of the persons at whom Robertson, and Iortin, and other SUCH VERY MISERABLE SECOND-HAND WRITERS, have sneered, were men of enlarged minds, purified affections, and holy lives—that they were justly reverenced by men—and, above all, favourably accepted by God, and distinguished by the highest honor which He vouchsafes to those whom He has called into existence, that of being the channels of His love and mercy to their fellow-creatures." (Maitland's Dark Ages, 3rd Ed. Pref. vi & v.)

I may remark that Mr. Maitland pays your favourite historian, Robertson, no very high compliment in classing him among "very miserable second-hand writers," although you have severely censured the Popes for placing on the "Index" the works of this same "very miserable second-hand" writer, who "sneered" at "thousands" of persons infinitely superior to himself in every respect.

Mr. Maitland, after giving numerous proofs of the extensive use of the Holy Scriptures in the "dark ages," says:—"I have NOT found any thing about the arts and engines of hostility, the blind hatred of half barbarian kings, the fanatical fury of their subjects, or the reckless antipathy of the popes. I do not recollect any instance in which it is recorded that the Scriptures, or any part of them, were treated with indignity, or with less than profound respect. I know of nothing which should lead me to suppose that any human craft or power was exercised to prevent the reading, the multiplication, the diffusion of the Word of God," (Ibid. p. 220 and 221.) "The fact, however, to which I have so repeatedly alluded is simply this—the writings of the dark ages are, if I may use the expression, made up of the Scriptures. I do not merely mean that the writers constantly quoted the Scriptures, and appealed to them as authorities on all occasions, as other writers have done since their day—though they did this, and it is a strong proof of their familiarity with them—but I mean that they thought and spoke and wrote the thoughts and words and phrases of the Bible, and that they did this constantly and habitually as the natural mode of expressing themselves. They did it, too, not exclusively in theological or ecclesiastical matters, but in histories, biographies, familiar letters, legal instruments and documents of every description." (Ibid. p. 470.)

I shall now invite your attention to the evidence of the Protestant Bishop, Tanner, who in "An account of all the Abbeys, Priories and Friaries, formerly existing in England and Wales," tells us that "in every great Abbey there was a large room called the 'Scriptorium,' where several writers made it their whole business to transcribe books for the use of the library. They sometimes, indeed, wrote the Leger books of the house, and the Missals, and other books used in divine service; but they were generally upon other works: the Fathers, Classics, Histories, &c." (Pref. p. 19 and seq.)

The great Protestant Philosopher, LEIBNITZ, says:—"For it is manifest that both books and letters have been preserved by the aid of the monasteries." "Constat enim libros et literas monasteriorum ope fuisse conservatos." (Tom. v. Opp. Ep. 14.) The same author, speaking of the monastry of Corbeia, says: "Which, through its monks, excelling not less in learning than in piety, spread the light of the faith throughout the entire North." (Ibid.)

To this splendid testimony in favour of the monks, I may add the testimony of another distinguished Protestant, ELLENDORF, who testifies that "without the clergy, and chiefly without the monks, we would not have now the works of the fathers, nor of the classics." (De Hierarchia, tom. 1. c. 4.)

The North American Review, 1840, Art. Hallam's Middle Ages, has the following:—"The great ascendancy of the papal power, and the influence of Italian genius on the literature and the fine arts of all countries, made Italy essentially the centre of light—the sovereign of thought—the capital of civilization"!

Drake assures us, on the authority of Warton, "that the monks of Monte Cassino (in Italy) were distinguished, not only for their knowleege of science, but for their attention to polite learning, and their acquaintance with the classics. Their learned abbot, Desiderius, collected the best Greek and Roman authors. The fraternity not only composed learned treatises on music, logic, astronomy, and the Vitruvian architecture, but likewise employed a portion of their time in transcribing Tacitus, &c. &c. This laudable example was, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, followed with great spirit and emulation, by many English monasteries." (Literary Hours, vol. II. p. 435.

The Quarterly Review for December, 1811, has the following beautiful passage:—"The world has never been so much indebted to any other body of men as to the illustrious order of Benedictine monks. Tinian and Juan Fernandez are not more beautiful spots on the ocean, than Malmesbury, Lindisfarne, and Jarrow were in the ages of our Heptarchy. A community of pious men devoted to literature, and to the useful arts, as well as to religion, seems in those days like a green Oasis amid the desert. Like stars on a moonless night, they shine upon us with a tranquil ray. If ever there was a man who could truly be called venerable, it was he to whom the appellation is constantly fixed, Bede, whose life was passed in instructing his own generation, and preparing records for posterity. In those days the Church offered the only asylum from the evils to which every country was exposed,—amidst continual wars, the Church enjoyed peace,—it was regarded as a sacred realm by men, who, though they hated one another, believed in and feared the same God. * * The wise as well as the timid and gentle fled to the 'Goshen' of God, which enjoyed its own light and calm amidst darkness and storms."

You will be pleased to remember that this mass of unexceptionable testimony, in proof of what the Church has done for education, is not the "yelling of illiterate agitators," but the sober, candid, unbiassed evidence of Protestant divines, philosophers, historians, and reviewers of great learning. I would also remind you that the historical facts which I have alleged cannot be blotted out from the pages of history by the vulgar abuse and scurrility of all the anonymous and other writers who may fill your columns with their own low sneers and the fanatical exuviæ of Robertson and "other such very miserable second-hand writers."

I have the honor to remain,
Your very obedient and humble servant,
A. MACDONALD.
St. Dunstan's College, Jan. 28th, 1862.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EXAMINER.

SIR—Through your columns allow me to direct attention to a letter from "Chanticleer," which appeared in the 'Islander' of the 10th of January inst. It will be sufficient to inform you pretty clearly who he is, and then his scribbling or anything he says will not have much force.

"Chanticleer" says that "a correspondent should have a subject of sufficient public interest to write about." I beg to differ with you, Mr. "Chanticleer," for a person may be obliged to write about a subject uninteresting not only to the public in general, but to himself. But did "Chanticleer" choose such a subject as he has spoken of? He did not; but imprudently interfered between "Observer" and myself in what he considers a personal squabble; and if he considers that our correspondence is unfit for the columns of a newspaper, why should he write what is certainly useless? What does he intend to gain by his interference? There are some who, when others surpass them in every respect, will get envious and offer as much opposition as possible. I may inform him that if "Observer" and I have a quarrel, we can do without his interference. And if he considers "Observer's" first letter "uncalled for," much less was his, as he was not provoked by any previous communication. "Chanticleer's" only reason for writing is, THAT I WAS NOT FOOLISH ENOUGH TO ALLOW HIM TO CHEAT ME; and, if I do not forget, he is displeased with "Observer" because he also was too clever for him.

"Chanticleer" thinks I did not stick to my subject, and that I proved myself "an adept at writing incoherently." What could you expect from "Chanticleer?" And if he only crows loudly in that manner, without showing where or how I departed from my subject, or written incoherently, it will not suffice. Mr. "Chanticleer," it is very easy to speak, but to prove indisputably that what you say is undoubtedly true, is difficult. Your attempt to represent my composition as "miserable," "incoherent" and not "to the purpose," is but feeble without proof. You did not even show if I made a mistake in spelling, punctuation, or if I expressed myself improperly. You simply SAY that I wrote incoherently. Prove it. And that is what you should have done before you gave your opinion of it, and what you would have done if you could. But did I not stick to my subject? Certainly I did. He must know that I did not choose any particular subject of public interest at first: I simply defended myself against the unprovoked attacks of an unprincipled individual. Will he deny that privilege? Were he so attacked would he succumb to it? A man's reputation may suffer if he will allow any person to ridicule him with impunity. Yet I have devoted a short space to a subject which engrosses the public mind, and which is considered of "sufficient public interest" to be discussed in the columns of newspapers. "Chanticleer" may differ with me in opinion, but it is beyond his ability to prove that I have written incoherently, or that I was not master of my subject.

I will now direct attention to some parts of "Chanticleer's" letter, which will show plainly that he can neither write properly nor "to the purpose." In the second paragraph he uses the word either. Now, all know that either means "one or the other," and cannot properly be used in speaking of five or more individuals. He might have used a better word than "enabled" where he has it. The word "somewhere" does not relate to time at all, and is not only improper but superfluous. By reading the following sentence from "Chanticleer's" letter, viz., "and the finale is an indignant assertion that the man who can write in such an elegant style would never do anything towards feathering my nest," you will perceive that he misunderstood "Observer." "Observer" did not say that I would not likely feather his nest, but that Mr. Longworth would not likely do so.

Again, "Chanticleer," alias A—— E——, thought proper to analyze our letters. Let us see how he has succeeded. He quotes some "terms" which appeared in our letters, and thinks that by doing so he analyzes them! If "Chanticleer" were requested to analyze a lesson how would he do it? Would he only mention some of the words it contained? It seems to me that he does not know the meaning of common English words.

I am, yours, &c.,
JAMES McNEILL.
Canoe Cove, January 20, 1862.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EXAMINER.

MY DEAR SIR—Some thoughtless people in this community, have been assiduous in their exertions to fix upon me the authorship of a communication which appeared in the 'Examiner' of the 27th instant, above the signature "Dreamer." This calumny you will yourself, Mr. Whelan, I believe, do me the justice to refute publiciy; and will also, through your journal, give publicity to this my own unequivocal disavowal of the paternity imputed, adding my declaration that, I had, and have no knowledge whatever of that communication, excepting *only* as I saw and read it in the 'Examiner.'

Your obd't servant,
A. MITCHELL.
Ch. Town, Saturday 1st Feb., 1862.

[We have no hesitation in saying that Mr. Mitchell did not write the article referred to.—ED. EX'R.]

The Examiner.

Charlottetown, February 3, 1862.

News by the British, Colonial and Foreign Mails.

ENGLISH NEWS.

THE Courier arrived here on Wednesday evening last with the usual American and Colonial Mails, together with an English Mail, which reached Halifax per R. M. S. Europa on Saturday night, 25th inst. Latest dates by the latter are to the 11th inst. The news furnished by this arrival is comprised in the following items.

The news respecting the release of Messrs. Mason and Slidell was received with great joy in England. Several of the leading English papers are pretty hard on Brother Jonathan,—sneering at his ready submission after such vain boasting. Others of the leading papers take an opposite view, and condemn any attempts at outraging the feelings of the American people by exciting the public mind in England against them.

The 'Times' says the talk is that Government has already spent over £2,000,000 on the preparations for hostilities with America.

The Earl of Elgin is shortly to leave for India, having been appointed Governor General of that vast dependency.

H. M. S. 'Ranger,' in November last, captured a slaver, with 850 slaves on board, and took her to St. Helena. The name and nation of vessel unknown.

Several large vessels have been taken up at Liverpool to convey cotton to New York.

Dr. Durrant, of the Niger Expedition, has just arrived in England. He reports having seen the long-lost Dr. Baikie, the African traveller, at the confluence of the Niger late last November, in good health.

A Naples correspondent, writing to England under date of the 12th ult., says the eruption of Mount Vesuvius has destroyed the city of Torre del Greco. The suffering produced is immense.—

The American frigate 'Tuscarora' was at Southampton on the 10th inst., watching the 'Nashville.' A boat from the frigate had been discovered the previous night in the dock near the Nashville, and ordered off.

Warlike preparations still continue unabated in England. The steamers Spartan, St. Andrew and Ajax are loading with heavy stores from Woolwich Arsenal for Halifax and Jamaica. The Morning Post says that the British possessions in North America will be permanently occupied by a strong military force, in which the Royal Artillery will preponderate.

Disturbances have broken out amongst the blacks on the West Coast of Africa, near Sierra Leone, and there was some sharp fighting between the British and the natives; but we wait for more reliable details.

CLOTHING OF THE TROOPS IN CANADA.—Every man is to be supplied with two pairs of woollen drawers, one sheepskin overcoat, one pair of sealskin mits, one pair of Canadian boots, two pairs of worsted stockings, one sealskin cap with ear mufflers, one chamois leather waistcoat, one comforter, one jersey, and two merino under vests.

DISTRESS IN LANCASHIRE.—Accounts from various manufacturing towns in Lancashire convey information as to the rapid spread of the distress, which was for some time prevalent. The support by which many families sustain themselves from day to day during this inclement season is said to be of the most meagre description. In Manchester itself things are no worse than they were some weeks ago, although much cannot be said touching their improvement. At the present moment (according to the chief constable's return), there are of the 46,700 operatives at Manchester, 28,553 working full time; 11,869 working short time; and 6,178 wholly unemployed.

Telegraphic despatch at Paris from Alexandria, 8th inst., states that the Turks had maltreated several Christians at Tripoli. An indemnity demanded by French Consul. The frigate Magodore had arrived at Tripoli.

The 'Czas' of Cracow states that the Russian Government has presented Cardinal Antonelli an ultimatum extremely embarassing for the Court of Rome, to the effect that if the Pope will not condemn the conduct of the Polish clergy, Russia will recognize the kingdom of Italy.

A violent shock of an earthquake was felt on the 10th inst., at Dresden.

A notice from the Herald's College states that it is not expected that the public should appear in mourning after Sunday, the 9th February.

The Spanish Government have granted the ubiquitous Confederate steamer Sumter sanctuary on condition of her forty two captured prisoners being given into their custody, a decision which threatens to result in the departure of the American Consul from Cadiz.

COTTON TO NEW YORK.—The demand for steamers to carry cotton from Liverpool to New York still continues, and on the 7th the steamer Bahiana was taken up for the conveyance of cotton to America.

EARTHQUAKE AT GREECE.—*Trieste, Jan. 7.*—Advices received here from Athens to the 28th ult., states that a violent shock of an earthquake had occurred along the northern coast of the Peloponnesus.—Athens was uninjured, but new and old Corinth, Algion, and Patras had been damaged. The Chambers at Athens had voted a sum of 10,000 drachmas to relieve the sufferers by the catastrophe.

CHINA.—CANTON, Dec. 30.—A *coup d'etat* has taken place at Pekin.—The members of the Cabinet have been imprisoned. A new ministry has been formed under the presidency of Prince Kung.

The news of the havoc which the Sumter is causing among the Federal merchant vessels in European waters shows that at the time the American press are enlarging on their ability to sweep British commerce from the seas by swarms of privateers, they are unable to protect their own flag from the most daring and vexatious attacks.—*London Times.*

In an article on American affairs the Liverpool 'Courier' says:—

"It is well known that a proposition for breaking the blockade was laid before the British by the French Cabinet at least three months since. France suffers more than we have yet suffered from the want of cotton. She had no India to send her a supply, and she has fewer trades to compensate for the loss of one. The policy of the English Cabinet all through has been directed to check the impulsiveness of France, until, at last, France actually suspects England of a design to destroy the cotton manufacture of France in order to develope cotton cultivation in India. This idea is just as absurd as that so lately incubated by the Peace Society, which imagines that it is intended to erect the Southern States into a monarchy, with Prince Alfred as king. However, it must be entertained. Some circumstances, however, have recently come to light which compel action on the part of France, and we are much mistaken if that action be not as gentle as the course adopted by England. The *Sumter* took refuge in the harbour of St. Pierre, at Martinique, and the Federal frigate *Iroquois* pursued her thither. The captain of the *Iroquois* actually attempted to effect a blockade of St. Pierre in the port itself. Being warned off, he bribes some person to let him know by signals the hour of the *Sumter's* departure, and he practically blockades the harbour by cruising three miles off land for ten days. He commits a gross breach of neutrality, and now tells the world in his official despatches that "the French must pocket it." He acknowledges that the people of Martinique were all in favor of the *Sumter*, because of her connexion with Louisiana, formerly a French possession. He insults France in the presence of Frenchmen, and in a port of a French colony. And having done so, he boasts of having acted with great self-denial, and writes to his Government to know "whether he is any longer to observe an international law" which baffles him so completely.

France must, and most assuredly will, take action on this matter. The parties who have eaten one leek will, we dare say, be ready to swallow another. But apologies will not always disarm resentment for a wrong, and it is quite possible that the Emperor of the French may think that the best way of preventing similar outrages in future is to break a blockade which really has no existence except *on paper*. We find in the American official *correspondence* that the same hostility which is manifested towards us is exhibited towards France. The same threats, though in milder language, are directed against her. France is not tied down by the connexions of kith, and kin, and language, which influence us, though the Americans forget them. Free and impulsive in her action, France may adopt short and decisive measures in requital for the wrong committed against her.

Should this be so, and we believe that it is intended, immediately upon the complete settlement of the Mason and Slidell affair, to lay a formal remonstrance against the sham blockade before the Federal Cabinet, the cotton of the South will again set our merry wheels *agoing*, instead of darkening the air along the shores of Carolina.

FEDERALS WATCHING THE NASHVILLE.—Southampton, Jan. 10.—Three are armed men and an officer from the Federal corvette Tuscarora were found last night in the dock watching the Nashville. They were discovered by Mr. Philip Hedge, the dock superintendent, close to the Nashville's bows. They had dark lanterns, and combustibles for the purpose of signalling the Tuscarora should the Nashville attempt to leave the docks. Mr. Hedge stated the docks were private property, that they had no right there for such a purpose, and insisted upon their leaving immediately, which they eventually did. The Nashville is now getting up steam to leave the docks and to anchor near the Tuscarora. The Confederate war steamer Sumter is expected here; she has 7 guns and 140 men. At 10 a. m. a boat left the Tascarora and came on towards the dock as if reconnoitring. The boat returned to the Tuscarora as fast as possible.

WAR PREPARATIONS.—Notwithstanding the conciliatory intelligence brought by the City of Washington from America, no relaxation has been considered necessary in the warlike preparations in progress at Woolwich Arsenal; on the contrary, increased diligence is observable throughout the departments. The shipment of stores, forming a heavy cargo, has been commenced on board the fine new screw steamers Spartan and Ajax for Halifax and Jamaica. They consist of upwards of 2,000 tons, principally shot and other heavy stores. Huge piles and pyrmids of cased Armstrong and loose cannon shot and shell, which hare been stocked and stored during the last year, weae cleared out and hoisted on board in readiness for the earliest possible departure.

COLONIAL.

BURNING OF THE GOVERNMENT HOUSE AT TORONTO.—On Saturday, the 11th inst., a large number of the officers of the 30th regiment took up their quarters at the Government House, Toronto, which had been fitted up for their reception, but the same evening they were compelled to evacuate it in rather a hasty manner, in consequence of the building taking fire. A few minutes before eleven o'clock at night a dense volume of smoke was observed issuing from the cellar, on the western side of the main entrance on King street. The chief-engineer, asked by some men of the 30th regiment, attempted to extinguish the flames with pailsfull of water and cutting away the burning embers, the ceiling of the cellar being on fire. This they considered they had succeeded in doing, when to their astonishment they found that the flames were breaking through the roof of the building directly over their heads, and in a short time the fire spread rapidly over the whole structure. Notwithstanding the most strenuous exertions to stay the flames, the entire roof and upper portion of the principal building was completely destroyed, and the building itself rendered comparatively useless. The loss is estimated at between $2,000 and $3,000. The following were among the officers who were burned out—Major Dillon, Capt. Clarkson, Capt. Moreson, Capt. Smith, Lieut. Stewart, Lieut. Stevenson, Lieut. Williamson, and Lieut. Morewood.

The Quebec *Chronicle*, in an article on the late census of Canada, gives the following:

"Of the 2,506,755 inhabitants of Canada, 1,917,777 were born in the Provinces. The native Canadians of British and those of French origin are nearly equal, being 1,087,170 and 880,607, respectively. Next to these, the two most numerous classes of our population, come the Irish, with 241,423; the English and Welsh with 127,429; the Scotch with 111,952; the natives of the States with 64,399, and the Germans and other Teutons, with 23,855. Among these are 11,413 colored persons, almost all resident in Canada. It is noticeable, however, that there are only 12,717 Indians left us, and that only 3,061 Frenchmen make Canada their home, of whom more than three-fourths are residents of Upper Canada.

"Coming to the question of religions, we perceive that 1,200,870 are Roman Catholics, and that the Church of England, with 374,887 followers, stands next. Then come the Methotists, (the Wesleyans being the strongest branch) with 872,462; the Presbyterians with 346,991, of whom the members of the Free Church slightly outnumber those of the Kirk; and the Baptists with 69,310. It is not a little lamentable to find 18,850 professing no religion at all.

"Comparing our condition in 1861 with that in which we were in 1852, we note that the population of the country has increased 36 per cent, from 1,842,265 to its present figure. The native Canadian population numbered then only 73 per cent of the total; they are now 76 per cent, or, more than three-quarters. The French Canadians were then 35 per cent of the whole; they are now nearly 38 per cent—a proof of the rapid natural increase of their race. The Church of Rome then counted 47 per cent of our people within its folds. It now includes nearly 54 per cent of them. Were it not too long, it would be interesting to mark the increase or decrease of other nationalities and religion also.

"If we compare our progress with that of other countries, we have every reason to be satisfied. Great Britain increased its population only about 18 per cent, from 1840 to 1850; our rate of increase is more than three times as much, and although the States augmented their figures from 23,191,875 in 1850 to 31,429,891, it will be seen that this is an increase of but 35½ per cent, and therefore inferior to ours."

"A GALLANT OFFICER."—A circumstance connected with the calling out of the militia has come to our notice, which constrains us to confess that the whole of our officers are not heroes, although we are satisfied that the great majority of them would do their duty bravely. A certain officer in the County of Haldemand, (we are without his name.) on receipt of the news that flank companies were to be called out, felt, like Bob Acres, his courage oozing out at his finger ends, and determined to get out of the force immediately. He accordingly took his commission and sent it to his Colonel with the following endorsation:

—"dear Curnal, i beg to resine mi commission. Bein a disipel of Krist i cannot take up the sord."

Fact!!—*Hamilton (Canada) Spectator.*

RAILWAY DELEGATION.—The Hon. Joseph Howe returned to Nova Scotia in the *Europa* on Saturday night. We understand that the subject of the Intercolonial Railroad has been presented to Her Majesty's Government in due form, but that no answer is expected till the Cabinet re-assemble before the meeting of Parliament.—*Halifax Sun, Jan. 27.*

MILITARY DISTRICTS OF CANADA.—The Quebec Chronicle says that it has been determined that the Head Quarters of the army are to be at Montreal, and that there are to be at least two districts in Upper Canada, with a general officer in command of each. The first of these is called the Hamilton district, the head quarters being at the city of Hamilton, when Major-General G. Napier, C. B., is to be in command. It will extend along the frontier from Port Hope, on Lake Ontario, to Long Point, on Lake Erie, and include Toronto, Brantford, Simcoe, St. Catherines, &c. The second is called the London district, to be commanded by Major-General David Russell, C. B., whose head quarters are at London, and it includes the extreme West of the Peninsula of Upper Canada Whether there will be a third district in Upper Canada, with Kingston as head quarters, will depend on future events; in the meantime that part of the country is under the charge of the officers at Montreal.

The Guards are to be quartered at Montreal, where the Rifle Brigade is now arriving. The idea of the authorities seems to be that the regiments at present in Quebec, or even one of them, would be sufficient to garrison the city, together with the local Militia and a detachment of Royal Engineers.

A man named John Enwright, living in West Flamboro, Canada, got drunk on Thursday morning, Jan. 9th, went home, turned his family out of doors, set the house on fire, and was burned up in it.

QUEBEC, Jan. 17.—The first detachment of the 62nd Regiment from Halifax, which arrived at Riviere du Loup on Wednesday morning, left that place for Montreal direct, by express train, yesterday morning. They numbered about one hundred and sixty men. A second detachment of the same Regiment was expected to leave Riviere du Loup at three o'clock yesterday after noon for Montreal.

THE HOGAN MURDER.—James Brown has been placed on his trial a second time, at Toronto, for the murder of Mr. Hogan, and has again been found guilty. He is sentenced to be executed on Monday, the 10th March next.

A despatch from Jesse Hoyt, Esq., at Antigonish, to the News Room, states that seven hundred firkins of butter, and three dead bodies, were picked up on the shore at Cheticamp, C. B. The rail of a wrecked vessel was discernable from shore at low water—name unknown—supposed from Canada.

Schr. Elizabeth Ann, of Cornwallis, from P. E. I., is on shore at Three Fathom Harbor, bound to the States, (abandoned), 3500 bushels potatoes.

Schr. Leader, of Prince Edward Island, blown out from Island—no one on board. When in ice off Cape Negro, was robbed of chains, anchors, rigging, and sails. Masts cut away—vessel floated to Strait of Canso, and is now in Emery's Cove, uninjured by elements.—*Hx. paper.*

SPIRIT OF THE ENGLISH PRESS ON THE AMERICAN QUESTION.

THE surrender of the Southern Commissioners by the Federal Government, has, as might be expected, given rise to lengthy comments in most of the leading journals of Great Britain; and gratification at the peaceful solution of the difficulty is the sentiment by which they are nearly all characterised. They do not, however, attempt to conceal the fact—patent to all the world—that the surrender was made by the Washington Government not from a sense of justice, but from an emotion of fear; and that war is postponed only because the Federal Government are not now prepared to encounter a new enemy. To show the spirit of the English press on this subject, we give below a few extracts from some of the leading journals:—

(From the Times.)

It is a great victory, though it is but an escape from being obliged to conquer. We are but where we were before we were so grossly insulted. We have but curbed for a moment the insolence of a neighbour who took pleasure in continually provoking us, and had permitted himself at last to go beyond the possibility of sufferance. We have done nothing to set up monuments to commemorate; we have only held our own in the great community of nations, and read a necessary lesson to an ill-mannered companion. There have been times in our history—times when we had not the strength we could now put forth—when we should have had no such real joy as we now feel in the hindrance of such a conflict. There are other nations which even at this age of the world would not have thought it consistent with their renown to manifest such patience and long suffering under outrage as we have exhibited. If the same experiment had been tried upon France, we question whether the same forbearance would have been afforded to the aggressor, or the same readiness to receive a tardy and grudging reparation. We have manifested a deliberation and a tranquility under insult which even we could not have shown towards a people for whom we thought it right to make fewer allowances, or whom we feared more. The Government of the Federal States had done in mere wantonness what no nation of the *Old* World had ever dared to do. They had invaded the sanctuary which England extends to all political exiles who seek her protection; and to this wound inflicted on her most sensitive pride, they had added an insult to her maritime flag and a menace to her security in traversing the seas. On all hands it is now admitted that the offence was at once insult and wrong, and it is no great triumph, therefore, that it should have been followed by reparation. If we had to deal with a friendly and courteous people, we should have had no occasion for preparations of war. If a French or an English captain, while the two nations are upon their present terms, were to gratify a crack-brained freak or an insane thirst of notoriety by some piratical outrage against the foreign flag, neither government would wait to see whether any miserable advantage could be gained by the circumstance. The act would be at once disavowed, and the booty returned, with apologies and compensation. This was the course, which, if Federal America had been courteous, or even shrewd, Federal America would have pursued. Mr. Seward missed a great opportunity when he failed to act as a European statesman would have acted under similar circumstances. At this moment there is no great sympathy here for either party. The attraction we feel towards a weaker nation invaded by a stronger and richer nation, is repelled by the very general detestation of slavery; and, if Mr. Seward had seized the opportunity for a graceful and courteous act, we would not answer for how far our countrymen might have been tempted from their rigorous neutrality. It was a gross blunder for the shrewd Minister of a shrewd people to miss the chance of a great advantage only to do the same act at last under circumstances of unavoidable humiliation.

But we are told that a very elaborate note of protest accompanies this surrender. We have long since learned to value transatlantic statesmen less for what they say than for what they do. It is by deeds, and not by arguments, that the fact we to-day announce has been brought about. It is not Vattel and Rynkershoek, and Stowell and De Hauteville, who have influenced this controversy, but the promptitude with which we reinforced Admiral Milne's fleet, and poured battalion after battalion into Canada. They loudly proclaim this in America, and Mr. Seward's note will very probably be found to bear marks of the same sentiment. We make up our minds in advance, therefore, to accept with unruffled equanimity any quantity of words. Even if there should be muffled threats and expressions of ill-will we shall humbly hope to outlive them. We have every reason to be satisfied with the position which this country has held throughout. We have never deviated from grave and courteous discussion, and have never descended to retort the wild invectives which came from the other side of the Atlantic. The war departments have manifested an efficiency which give us confidence in ourselves, and will give us security from future insult. The Government have acted with a rare courtesy and temper, but have displayed, together with dignified deliberation, firmness, promptitude, and courage. Nor will we refrain from adding, what every one will feel while he reads this news, that the man upon whom the nation instinctively relied while the crisis lasted deserves our warmest gratitude now that the peril is overcome. It is indeed a rare triumph to grace the latter years of a life so happily prolonged, that Lord Palmerston has found, and has used, the opportunity to curb the arrogance of the only people which has in this generation entered systematically upon a course of offence towards England.

(From the Morning Post.)

At the last moment, not from spontaneous good feeling, but under the pressure of the British demands, the American Government has given way, and conceded the surrender of the four prisoners seized on board the Trent. They were to be given over to Lord Lyons "when and where he pleases." We take it for granted that this tardy recognition of the justice of our demands will have been accompanied by the required apology. If we are not misinformed, a long memorandum from the Cabinet of Washington has been transmitted in reference to the question. In the meantime we are startled by a new complication, which bears the strongest family resemblance to the preceding outrage. It appears that the commander of the Federal steamer Santiago de Cuba boarded, off the coast of Texas, the schooner Eugenia Smith, sailing under British colors between Matanzas and Havannah, and took out of her two passengers, supposed to be agents of the Confederate States. These gentlemen, Messrs. Zacchari and Rogers, have been confined in Fort Lafayette, for the reason, as we suppose, that the executive must have thought it too great an absurdity to instal them in the quarters in Fort Warren still warm from the occupation of Messrs. Slidell and Mason. We can only trust that these latest captives will be speedily released with less trouble to us, and less humiliation to the Americans.

(From the Daily News.)

The reparation due to Great Britain is made, and the honor of our flag is signally, yet peaceably, vindicated. Nothing less than a clear perception of the paramount necessity of maintaining the respect due to our rights—an intuition of the mischiefs that must ensue, if a nation with duties and cares such as ours were to consent to lead a maimed and impaired life—would have sufficed to unite the British people in a resolve to incur the responsibilities of war with America at this moment. The difficulties and risks which rise to view in the contemplation of most wars had here no restraining effect; but rather their absence and the ease with which our objects might be gained, was a consideration operating upon an honorable disposition to stop our hand. The incidental effects of a war waged by England against the government of the United States, the character of an intervention which it must have assumed, and above all the practical alliance into which it must have brought us with an abhorred league of men stealers, have had a thousand times more to do with the dread of an unfavourable answer from Washington than any estimate of loss to ourselves; and, in a crisis, the necessity of maintaining our due position among the nations of the world must and would have over-ruled every other consideration. From these gloomy prospects we are now happily delivered. Our government has united firmness with conciliation. The government of Washington, which we were lately told was a puppet in the hands of the New York mob, has acted with all the reserve and decision which can attend independence and responsibility.

CIVIL WAR IN THE STATES.

THE BATTLE IN KENTUCKY.

CINCINNATI, Jan. 20.—A combined attack was made to-day on Gen. Zollicoffer's entrenchments at Mill Springs, Ky., resulting in a complete victory for our troops. The stars and stripes now float over the fortifications. We captured all their camp property and a large number of prisoners. Our loss is heavy. Gen. Zollicoffer's dead body is in the hands of our troops.

The Commercial's Louisville despatch says despatches have been received at headquarters which announce that the battle took place on Sunday, not Saturday, and that General Thomas continued the pursuit until night. Our forces followed close upon the rebels, who ran before them in the wildest confusion, like a flock of frightened sheep, to their intrenchments on the north bank of the river. In front of these they laid all night expecting to storm them in the morning, but with the aid of their boats and barges the enemy managed to get across the river before daylight, leaving behind all their artillery, ammunition, horses, tents, 80 wagon loads of quartermaster's and medical stores, all of which fell into our hands. Our troops had possession of their intrenchments early this morning. After reaching the opposite side of the river, the rebels dispered in every direction. 200 dead and wounded rebels were picked up on the field. Zollicoffer was found in a wagon mortally wounded.

Our loss is not known, but must have been considerable. The surgeon of the 10th Indiana regiment telegraphs that that regiment had seventy killed and wounded. General Thomas's division embraces some of the best regiments in this department.

So far as I can learn, the 9th Ohio, 10th Indiana, of Minnesotta 18th regulars, 4th and 10th Kentucky were among the engaged. Col. Manson's brigade reinforced Gen. Thomas during Saturday night, making a forced march of twenty-five miles through heavy roads, and managed to arrive three hours before the fight, in which they took part in spite of their fatigue.

The tenor of all official despatches shows that the affair resulted in the most brilliant victory of the war. No prominent officers on our side were killed.

Gen. Schoeif was unable to cut off the retreat of the enemy, owing to the bluffy character of the country, and the obstruction to the roads by felled timber.

[Somerset, where this battle took place, is the county town of Pulaski county, in Southern Central Kentucky. The town is eighty-five miles nearly due south from Frankfort, and the Cumberland river flows six miles south of it. It is the centre where three turnpikes meet and cross. The county contains coal and iron, and Somerset has an iron foundry, three churches and a branch bank.]

The President has received a private despatch stating that Roanoke Island and the city of Yorkshire have been abandoned by the rebels. Gen. Wool has notified Gen. Huger to remove the women and children from Norfolk.

The U. S. war steamer De Soto arrived at Ship Island, 1st inst., having in tow the French steamer of-war Milan, disabled—the De Soto having run into her at night off the passes of the Mississippi river, on account of her acting in a very suspicious manner. It turned out afterwards that the Frenchman was going into the river by permission of the government, to take off severel families that were desirous of leaving the territory of Davis & Co. The steamer displayed no lights, when run into, and all her actions seemed to prove that she was a stranger trying if our blockade was one of paper or not.

The expedition against Savannah, which has been so long promised, is supposed to be at last in progress. Reconnoitering parties, and corps ordered out for the purpose of clearing the way for gun-boats, have, since the 4th or 5th of the present month, been sent from Hilton Head, and have proceeded southward beyond Tybee Island. It was understood at Port Royal that these corps were provided with saws and apparatus for dragging logs of wood out of those of the rivers or navigable creeks south of the Savannah river—probably the Wilmington—into which the rebels had sunk obstructions, evidently supposing that it had destroyed the navigability of the streams.

It was further understood that this expedition was to be carried on both by water and land, and that the land force would consist of about half the troops under the command of Gen. Sherman, or ten thousand men. This number, it was thought, could be safely spared, as there is little danger that the rebels will undertake to cross the rivers for the purpose of attacking our troops. The Wabash and the gunboats were at Hilton Head, and could be at once placed in readiness to undertake their part of the service which might be required.

Warsaw Inlet was to be the first destination of the expedition when it should start. Of the time when this would occur there [illegible], of course, no means of information.

FROM FORT PICKENS.

Colonel Harvey Brown opened fire from Fort Pickens on the 1st inst., upon the rebel steamer Times, while loading stores at the Pensacola Navy Yard. He was provoked to adopt this course by the fact that the rebel batteries at Pensacola had been firing for some days previous at the small craft. The rebels returned the fire, several of their shells bursting within Fort Pickens, but wounding only one man. The firing was continued till evening, when the last shot came from Colonel Brown's guns. One of the shots from Fort Pickens made a breach in Fort Barrancas, and during the day the town of Warrington was set on fire by the Union shells, and continued to burn until the night of the 2d, when the Rhode Island left.

With regard to the expedition at Ship Island, in the Mississippi Sound, we learn, by way of Fortress Monroe, that the gunboats St. Louis, New London and Water Witch had proceeded towards Biloxi, on the 31st ult., and that at latest accounts the New London was returning with three schooners in tow, evidently prizes from the rebels. The steamer Rhode Island, from Galveston, which brought this news to Fortress Monoe, captured the rebel schr. Venus, off Galveston, bound for Franklin, Louisiana, with a cargo of tin, lead, copper and wood, from Port Isabel, valued at $10,000. She was sent to Ship Island.

BOSTON, January 22.

The passage by Congress yesterday of a bill authorizing the President to appoint two additional Secretaries of war, was, according to a statement made in the House, by the request of the President himself. This is preliminary to a thorough reorganization, by which not only will the transaction of all business of the army be facilitated, but visitors have an equal opportunity of obtaining access to the proper officers of the Department without unnecessary delay.

NEW YORK, Jan. 22.

Wilmington, N. C., advices to 21st received via Fort Munro.

One hundred vessels of Burnside's fleet had arrived in Pimlico Sound.

Simultaneous attack was expected on Roanoke Island and Newburn. Confederate forces preparing for fight.

British gunboat Racer, from Bermuda, reports safe arrival there of the Rinaldo on the 11th. She sailed immediately for St. Thomas.

Mexican advices to the 10th received via Havana. Vera Cruz is virtually besieged—and inland communication cut off. No supplies reach the city. Spanish regiment was driven back when a mile from Vera Cruz. Three thousand men were