CORRESPONDENCE.

"WHAT IS TRUTH?"

To the Editor of the Examiner.

Sir:—Many important questions of a practical as well as of a speculative character have ever been found engaging the attention of men. Still, to any reflecting mind, they will appear resolvable into the above simple inquiry, "What is truth?" In the exact form in which it here stands, it is indeed usually associated with "Pontius Pilate," the official betrayer of our Lord But in a slightly different sense from that in which propounded by him, it may be regarded as constituting the one interrogative which lies at the foundation of all human thought, of all human action, and of all human interest. In the existing jumble of social elements in the United States, for instance, how natural the question—Which of the two great contending parties is in the right? Which of the many conflicting principles there at war is most deserving of general sympathy? Who has strict justice on their side? In other words, taking the whole Rebellion into account as to its provoking causes, and as to its intrinsical merits, "What is truth?" How, using the expression in the same common import, may we not at the present, perhaps, rather than at any previous period of our social history, bring this very interrogation home to ourselves, and pointedly ask the people of this Island—in the midst of all our own existing party animosity—"What is truth?" As to the "Land Question" in particular, who have been *right* and who have been *wrong*? Who all along have been cherishing the most correct sentiments on this radical subject, and who have been eagerly sowing the tares of discord and upholding principles in themselves calculated to result in positive evil to the country at large? Who, in brief, have been actually our real "Pilates" and "Judases"—the whole sole betrayers of our poor tenantry "in every deed"?—"George Coles" or "Edward Palmer?"—"The editor of the *Examiner*" or "W. H. Pope?"—"Our present Government" or "their political opponents"? As to this question there can, in strict justice, be but one answer. Let us look at plain facts. The policy of Mr. Coles & Co. from the beginning was *what?* We all know that aggressive and progressive taxation of all proprietary lands still in a wilderness state was the sum and substance of that policy. This, every honest man in the country must be already sufficiently aware of to render any special remark on the fact here quite superfluous. The only observation indeed now worthy of being made on the nature of that policy is, that the proprietors themselves no doubt understood it far better than the people. They knew it full well. All their agents and sympathisers throughout the country knew the same. Hence their inveterate hostility to all true liberal or popular principles. Hence their long concerted and ever to be remembered enmity to George Coles. How clearly did they see, that if they could not succeed in crying *him* down, "their craft," by him so endangered, would soon have come to an end. Accordingly, they, for years together, kept denouncing him as "*a bad man.*" "Oh that scoundrel," that "mischief-making fellow," that "bad, bad—that awful bad man?" Such, in fact, was the only species of argument of which many of them had the smallest comprehension. Such, we say, for years, was their sole cry—their one great, ever new and unfailing political ordinance. And alas, how lamentably silly did they find but too many of the people to whom they kept ever and anon *blating* this fine sample of modern reasoning! How ready to believe the vilest, most pitifully childish, and most utterly untruthful slander which perhaps was ever propagated in Prince Edward Island! But here comes "the rub"—What have they now got for all their credulity? Had they only been clear-headed enough to have seen through "George Coles' policy"—yes that same George Coles' true policy, and have given him a fair chance to have carried it out, it is our solemn belief, and we write it from no party sympathy whatever, every tenant in this Province would have been able to purchase his land for 7s. 6d currency to-day, at the very highest. Not one Proprietor among them all but would, by this time, have been very glad to have got rid of his "ill-gotten" and infinitely more discreditably retained acres in this Island for probably even less than this sum to-day. "What," then, in this certain view of the subject, "is Truth?" "Coles's policy" persisted in a little longer, must inevitably have driven each and all of them to this at last. Must it not have unquestionably done so? We ask any man—we care not who—to look dispassionately at the unavoidable facts of the case, and deny this with a clear conscience if he dare! Here, then, is in itself a great fact worthy surely of the unbiassed reflection of every man who may have arrived at years of maturity in this Province; for, amidst all the noise and bluster and perfidy and stupid tom-foolery (for really we cannot designate it by any better name) perpetrated by our existing rulers "anent" this distracting Land Question, and notwithstanding all their abuse of those who are in every respect by much their superiors, we must now bluntly assert, in the face of the whole people of this Province, that what we have now written is exactly "*what is Truth.*" It is not one whit more, if in fact it be anything like as much as the entire, the undisguised, and the undisguisable truth. And further, we fearlessly challenge any man to undertake successfully to refute it. According to the nature of things, as well as of men, "Coles's policy," if it had only been consistently persevered in, could not, whatever way you choose to fix it, have well resulted otherwise than as we have just affirmed. And was this the man whom the unsuspecting tenantry of this Island were asked to regard as "a villain?" Was it not even so? Aye, the very George Coles whom they were drilled to believe a fellow terribly inimical to their best interests? Verily, therefore, while "the ox knew his owner, and the ass his master's crib," these people could not have known their own best friends! Credulous people! Likely enough they will now perceive, as usual, when too late, that they have been thoroughly "gulled." In all conscience they have been abundantly *sucked*. And whatever else may or may not be correct, this at all events forms one consideration which may be very safely put down for *what is truth*. No very pleasing consideration, one would suppose, to solace the jaded minds of any of our worthy tenantry after a long and laborious day's work. Pleasing or not pleasing, however, they must now make the best of it. Some, we are aware, take pleasure in this reflection, and publicly contend that it is nothing more than what many of them righteously deserve. For, notwithstanding all the council they got to the contrary, they would persist in electing "Proprietors" *to settle their* "Land Question." Wise people assuredly! oh very, very wise! In such pleasure, however, we cannot participate. Still we are willing to hope it may yet all turn out for the best. Experience in this case as in the most of others, although the hardest, may prove the most salutary of human teachers. And what a lesson have they now before them! Have they in very deed not got a full reward for all their *past credulity?* Look again at plain facts, and read, alas, the all too plain answer! They have, for one thing, got the proprietors snugly confirmed in their shabby titles! They have, for another thing, got an exorbitant price, considering the suppositious nature of these titles, settled on every foot of those Proprietors' so-claimed possessions. They have got for a third thing those proprietors themselves legally invested in such a measure as they never before enjoyed, with the full power of ejecting from those possessions every poor tenant among them the moment he fails to pay up the uttermost farthing of his unrighteously exacted rent. But they have got more. They have lost every circumstantial advantage over those proprietors which, from the late condition of the land tenure itself in this Province, they each individually inherited. All gone—all loss and no gain! What a rich harvest of benefits, to be sure, they have reaped from their mighty Government! But possibly some of them may still doubt the absolute reliability of this representation. Well, if so, we shall not at present give ourselves any trouble reasoning with them on the point. All we say is—"Boys, wait a little longer, and you shall see for yourselves." "Seeing," you know, "is believing." And if you refuse either to see or believe, we can safely promise you that some of you, in all likelihood, shall be made to "*feel*," and that too before very long, the genuine force of these same statements. O yes, the upshot of the whole matter is, that this Land Question is *now* in a fair way to turn out a pretty feeling subject. It will cause many to feel the sweets of hard work and little pay. It will necessitate not a few to feel the sublime pleasure of paying rent so long as they shall live. It will compel numbers to feel their pockets, while it will eventually oblige the greater part of P. E. Island tenants to feel the chilly touch of the oppressor's chain daily and hourly contracting still more unrelentingly about their so-called free born British limbs. Ye tenants of Prince Edward Island, have you not gotten a glorious reward from your present Government for all your credulity Don't you wish you may ever get the chance of allowing "horrid George Coles" to test fully the legitimate effects of his far better policy now? A bad man surely *he* who, if left alone, would, in all human probability, have liberated every inch of territory in this Province before to-day? *Fine fellows* E. Palmer, W. H. Pope, and all the rest of the proprietary sleek-faces, (oh very religious men too) who have thus designedly and on purpose—without even either meaning or wishing or intending to do anything else—for their own private interests—for the sake of their craft—their ill-gotten gains,—saddled the whole country with the charming burden just specified, and made bond slaves (*by law*) of two thirds of that country's present and future inhabitants! Aye, aye, now comes the query—and does it not come with a vengeance—"*What is Truth?*" Was there any necessity for a law ever having been passed demanding 15 years purchase and seven, or a dozen more likely, years back rent from the poor tenantry of this Island? The Government itself acknowledges that the measure is a bad one for the people. But if so, why enact it? Who, in the name of universal suffrage, *compelled* them to pass it? The country?—the British Government?—the Proprietors! No, no, there was no compulsion about it, but what is truth. They did so for the sake of their own selfish interests As constituted principally of proprietors, they, as the only local Government ever sillily permitted to club together on this Island, found their chance was come, and they simply acted accordingly. Such, in one word, is the splendid result of this long disputed Land Question.

Now, what a *fine* Government *we* have! What made them terminate the hopes of the tenantry thus disastrously, aye? What made them, session before last, take the duty off imported liquors and lay it on home manufactured and molasses? Was it not because Mr. D. Davies, one of their own number, had a large quantity of the *precious stuff* coming to the Island at the time? Perhaps some of our poor country folk never heard this fact before. Why did they take the duty off iron this very winter? Was it not to suit Hons. Jas. C. Pope and Yeo, two more of their own capital compact? Perhaps nobody ever understood this before. But 'twere vain to proceed thus—only we may just state that the sole reason they have legislated as they have done all along, is just because it suits their own private interests, and they have been allowed so long to have their own way, that they have at length arrived at the happy conclusion that the people are too dull and stupid to "know the difference;" and that is precisely *what is truth.* Glorious fellows! well met! go ahead! bully for you! Who will venture to say after this that you can't do things up to a nicety? Still in this unrestricted exercise of their present craft, we must honestly forewarn this very same magnificent Government of ours not altogether to lose sight of *what is truth.* Let them not forget the chief "rub"—that they, after all that has been said and done, have proven the worst set of "friends" into whose hands the people of this Province ever entrusted their political interests, and that on the skirts of their garments must be henceforth found the red stains of those "bleeding tenantry," those unfortunate P. E. Island Ethiopians whom *they* have now doomed to perpetual serfdom. Albeit, although they have "at the last" thus finely succeeded in "biting" those from whom they derive their power like serpents, and stinging them like adders, yet they may, peradventure, count still on being "double tongued" enough, after their most approved fashion, to beguile them afresh like the same slippery-going species of animals. Their last—("Catholic ascendancy in P E. Island") was certainly a grotesque bait enough. *Mic-mac ascendancy* will no doubt be their next! And in the hands of W. H. Pope (the very man for all such buffoonery) what a capital one it will make! To indulge in a Shakspearian mode of expression, these Shakspearian times, "*'Twill suit our model Government to a tea.*" Something of the kind we may at least confidently expect. Oh ain't they beauties? How awfully alarmed the poor creatures now are lest those "Tenant Leagues" should result in evil. They fear for nothing, however, as it happens, so much as for their own craft; and the tenantry very well know that their present rulers have betrayed their dearest interests—ignominiously so—and that the editors of the *Islander*, *Protestant* and *Monitor* newspapers, for the sake of the little scrubby pickings they respectively obtain by it—amounting simply like "Balaams" to "the wages of unrighteousness"—have rendered them all the assistance which their scanty-brained pates could possibly devise. Fie, fie to all such men! The people will not forget them in a very great hurry,—no fear of that part of it. But the only trouble is that they are likely to remember them in the right way when unhappily too late.

We would not, however, advise the tenantry even yet to despair of obtaining some more favorable terms than present prognostics seem to indicate. Let their associations be conducted in a legal and becoming manner. Let them stick together—stick always to "*what is truth*"—beware of all "Pilates," all "Judasses," all "wolves in sheep's clothing," and they may yet accomplish more than their most sanguine friends anticipate. We wish them still final success, and if they do not in the end secure for themselves something better than "15 years purchase, and 7 years and onward back rent"—all night to them.

Yours respectfully,
A LOVER OF TRUTH.

May 28, 1864.

To the Editor of the Examiner.

Sir—I see by *Ross's Weekly* that Mr. Adams delivered an address at the Tenant's Delegation Meeting, in Mr. Murphy's hotel in Charlottetown, on the 19th inst., which I conclude must have been written by some one, and that he only read it there, as there is a large portion of it in italics, and really for the life of me I cannot see how any man can speak in italics and initials. Then, in consequence of its being written, it must have been a premeditated address, and therefore should have been the more perfect and consistent. Mr. Adams says that Catholic Emancipation was gained by public meetings—then, why was theirs a private meeting, as all political matters were excluded. No person, I am informed, had dared to speak against the Government who passed the Bill which they are petioning Her Majesty to withhold her Royal assent from; and any person, it appears, would be permitted to speak against the Bill, but not against the men who have passed it—"Oh consistency thou art a jewel," as Adams's address says.

Now, how was Catholic Emancipation gained? certainly by a legal agitation brought to bear on the Parliament of England—it was granted by it, and passed into law by the King, Lords and Commons of the realm. And what was that Emancipation Act only a repeal of some of the old Penal Laws? and the Tenant leaguers may rest assured that they cannot get their condition "ameliorated" only by the very same means that were resorted to for the Emancipation of the Catholics, that is by a peaceful agitation to get at many members of our Colonial parliament as will repeal this obnoxious Bill against which they are petitioning—and who will pass just laws to "ameliorate" the condition of the tenantry, and any person who will not vote for a tenant right member, and against every man who voted in our Legislature for this obnoxious Bill, is a strong supporter of Landlordism, let him be a Tenant Leaguer or not; and in their pledge this should be the prevailing principle, that no person should receive any benefit from their association who would not vote against any and every one of the 16 members in the Assembly who helped to pass the Landlord's Bill, and for those only who would support tenant right to its fullest extent. It seems that the only men who attended at that delegation meeting were friends of the present Landlord Orange Gov't,* for, in that same studied, written address, that the most noble the Duke of Newcastle, who has shown himself to be the real tenant's friend, and who was the only person in all England selected by her most gracious Majesty the Queen to be the principal guide, preceptor and care-taker of her eldest son, the heir to England's throne, in his tour to and through North America, is written down by Mr. Adams as an "agrarian" house burner, and not a burner of a stranger's house either, but that of his own father; and all, says he, for the simple reason that he (the Duke's father) was opposed to him in politics. Who, I ask, will believe such nonsense? None but those who are always ready to believe a falsehood, and there is no doubt but it will go down well with the Orangemen, and that will be so much support for Mr. Adams at the next election when he stands at the Belfast District as a Candidate.

The Tenants are, Mr. Editor, entitled to form themselves into a league for mutual protection, and as you yourself remarked in a late No. of the *Examiner*, that for advice and counsel, every association requires leaders who should be the most intelligent in the community. And so should *their* leaders be the same, and not the incompetent ignoramuses they have shown themselves to be. These Delegates should have been sent by public meetings held in each Lot, instead of a kind of self-appointed Delegates from hole and corner meetings, about which very few heard until they were over, unless some of their friends, who, they knew, would not say anything against these previously written speeches, or any part of them. But it would be just as well, and a great deal better, to have those objectionable parts left out in time than to have the ignorance of their author or authors exposed. I hope some one with more ability than I, will take up Mr. Adams's address, and dissect it properly, as there is a great quantity of objectionable stuff in it; and a great many think it must have been dictated by a supporter of the Gov't., as the whole gist of it is to supplicate the Landlords to take some small sum that will be offered them, and then if that does not succeed, Mr. Adams says let tenant leaguers turn and support whom they choose to represent them. Not having the *Weekly*, I write from memory. However, this is the substance of his remarks; so that after all the fuss and petitioning and loss of time and money, it is to end in nothing if they and the Liberals cannot agree; so accordingly it is better to stop it in time, as there are not the least hopes of the Landlords submitting to their terms, unless they frighten them, and consequently the tenants should be frightened of any more Land Delegation humbugs.—What a pity that George Adams, Leonard Woods, Robt. Stewart and Alex. McNeill would not be sent to Sir Samuel Cunard, all the way to London, to negotiate a peace between him and the tenantry! How the latter would display to perfection his knowledge of Walker, Johnson and Worcester, as it seems he is largely read in these volumes.

When the tenants do league themselves, let them accept no such tom fools as the foregoing but let them select those who have proved themselves to be able, competent and honest in their political career, and let them not be humbugged into any belief that the Land Question is not a political question, for such a manœuvre is a thorough Tory, Landlord dodge; and no doubt invented by the present party in power for the purpose of diverting public opinion from scrutinizing their base acts towards the tenantry, as they knew an agitation would commence as soon as they passed the Landlords' Bill into law.

Yours respectfully,
CONSTITUTIONALIST.

King's County, May 31st, 1864.

* This is not correct. Many of the Delegates are, on general political grounds, very determined opponents of the Government.—Ed. Ex.

(FOR THE EXAMINER.)

Mr. Editor:—Knowing you to be a supporter of Education, and feeling confident that you will approve of any movement that is calculated to improve and develope the mental faculties, I therefore, transmit to you for insertion in your valuable and widley circulated journal an account of the laudable efforts that are being made in this locality for the advancement of literature. A meeting has recently been convened for the purpose of taking into consideration the propriety of establishing a literary Institute. The meeting was largely attended, not only by the inhabitants of the district, but those of the surrounding districts. Several gentlemen who were present expressed their views, at great length, upon the subject, and explicitly proved the great utility of such an institute, and the great benefits it would likely confer upon the rising generation, by affording them such an excellent opportunity of practising public speaking. After the several gentlemen had terminated their lengthy and appropriate addresses they proceeded to elect the following gentlemen office-holders for the present year, viz:—John Yeo, Esq., M. P. P., Patron; Mr Augustine Callaghan, President; Mr. James Henderson, Vice President; Mr. Joseph Murphy, Secretary; Mr. Robert Ramsay, Treasurer, and Mr. David Smith, Librarian. Managing Committee—Messrs. James Barclay, George Jelly, G. P. Palmer, T. Boyle, T. Ramsay. After the office-holders were elected it was moved that a library should be established in connection with the Institute, a subscription list was accordingly opened for the purpose of realizing a fund for the accomplishment of that object, when the parties present showed their zeal, in the cause which they had engaged, by the munificent contributions which they gave. The good effects of this Institute will not only be evinced by the material improvement it will effect in the persons who will attend it, but as it will be attended by persons of all denominations it will be the means of cultivating friendly affections among them, and teaching them to respect each other in a becoming and charitable manner. The members of this Institute will, during the summer months, meet once a fortnight, and during the winter months once every week. The Institute has been denominated the "Prince of Wales Institute."

By giving this a place in the columns of your paper you will extremely oblige

Yours very respectfully,
Lot 11, May 30th, 1864. A. C.

To The Editor of the Examiner.

Dear Sir—Through the medium of your widely circulated paper we beg to draw the attention of those immediately concerned, to the state of the boiler of the Southport ferry boat.

In consequence of some disarrangement on the 1st instant, we, as well as several others, having occasion to cross constantly, were not a little inconvenienced. We thought it right to pen these lines, as an Engineer previously took occasion to notice the defective state of her boiler, and fearing that if not looked after in time, she might meet the same end as the ill-fated "Fairy Queen." The former method of plying, namely, by sailing boats, can be adopted while she is undergoing the necessary repairs.

An article on boiler explosions from superheated steam, in reference to the *Chenango* disaster, in the 'Scientific American' of the 21st ult, will repay perusal to those interested in the matter.

Fearing I have encroached on your invaluable space,

I am, dear Sir,
Your ob't serv't,
June 3, 1864. SCISCET.

EUROPEAN NEWS.

THE NAVAL ACTION IN THE NORTH SEA.

A correspondent writing on the 11th, off Cuxhaven, says:—

The telegraph will have informed you of the sea fight which took place off Heligoland on Monday afternoon last. The Austro-Prussian flotilla returned to their moorings at the mouth of the Elbe between 3 and 4 a. m. yesterday morning, bearing evident signs of having been severely handled. The following particulars of the engagement may be relied upon as authentic:

On Saturday last, May 7, the Austrian frigates Schwarzenberg and Redetsky, in company of the Prussian gunboats Adler and Blitz, left their anchorage off Cuxhaven for a cruise in search of the Danish fleet. Capt Teggetoff, under whose orders the combined German flotilla is placed, is described by the pilot who brought him up the Channel as a very smart fellow, and the crews as bent upon fighting. However, the Danish fleet was not to be found, and on Monday morning the flotilla returned to its anchorage at the mouth of the Elbe, after a cruise of 48 hours. They had scarcely dropped anchor when a telegram reached the Austrian Consul at Cuxhaven, informing him that three Danish frigates were bearing down towards Heligoland. This intelligence was instantly forwarded to Captain Teggetoff, who gave orders to get up steam and put to sea at once.

The Schwarzenberg is a screw steam frigate, carrying 50 guns. Her crew amounted to 540 men on the morning of the engagement. Between decks she is fitted with heavy guns, mostly 60-pounders, her upper deck guns being 24-pounders. Of these last, two fore and two aft are rifled, the rest smooth bored.

The Radetsky is also a screw steam frigate, carrying 30 guns, and is likewise fitted with two rifled 24 pounders on her upper deck, fore and aft. Her crew numbered 310 men.

The Prussian gunboats Adler and Blitz, both cased with iron plates 2¼ inches thick, carry four rifled guns each on upper deck.

A little before 2 p. m., the German flotilla came in sight of the Danish frigates, which showed every willingness to accept the offered battle. The Schwarzenberg opened the proceedings by firing three blank shots, which were unanswered by the Danes. After this warning, Captain Teggetoff, taking the Schwarzenberg well in between the Danish frigates, the Niels Juel and the Dagmar, handling his ship as Admiral Lyons was wont to do the Agamemnon, fired a double broadside against the enemy's ships on either side of him. Although somewhat taken aback by this daring bit of seamanship, the Danish frigates lost no time in returning the fire, and the engagement soon became general. One of the first shots fired by the Niels Juel struck the officer second in command full in the breast, and of course killed him on the spot. He was buried yesterday in the cemetery at Cuxhaven, a large concourse of persons attending.

Shortly after, two shells struck the Schwarzenberg near the same spot, by one of the heavy guns, which was served by 16 men. Out of the 16, five were killed on the spot and nine wounded, only two getting off unscathed.

This episode was shortly followed by a disaster which threatened the destruction of the ship. The sails were furled, and as ill-luck would have it, a shell forced its way into the canvass, and bursting, set the whole rigging of the foremast in a blaze. The ship having her head to the wind, it became necessary to put her about, to prevent the flames communicating themselves to the mainmast. In this manner the Schwarzenberg was temporarily reduced to the sole use of her two aft rifle guns.

While the foremast was still burning, a shell burst in the outer chamber of the powder magazine, setting the timbers on fire, and creating a momentary panic among the crew. The flames, however, were at once extinguished, and the danger averted. To complete the discomfiture of the Schwarzenberg, her bowsprit was carried away by a round shot.

During the course of the engagement the Schwarzenberg was struck 70 times by shot and shell, and once by a chain shot, which is preserved on board. Her foremast is burnt down to a stump, and the side of the mainmast turned towards the flames is blistered all over from the heat.

The actual loss on board the Schwarzenberg amounted to 34 killed, 44 severely wounded, and between 30 and 40 slightly wounded. Although nothing is known for certain of the Danish loss it must have been considerable, or the Schwarzenberg in her disabled condition must have fallen into the enemy's hands. It seems the general opinion that officers and men behaved with great bravery and coolness, and the Emperor of Austria has already shown his sense of Captain Teggetoff's services by promoting him to the rank of admiral.

While it fared in this manner with the Schwarzenberg, the Radetzky did her best to draw off the attention of the Danish frigates, which showed considerable unwillingness to attend to other business, until they had succeeded in completely disabling the Schwarzenberg. However, before the conclusion of the engagement the Radetzky was struck by 28 shots, mostly on her side. A young naval cadet, who directed the fire of her two rifled cannon on the quarter deck, was severely wounded in the early part of the engagement, and died of his wounds yesterday morning at 11. The shell which fractured the thigh of the young officer passed clean between the legs of a seaman who was hauling back his gun to recharge it. In spite of his desperate wound, the brave young fellow cheered on his men, while he himself lay in agony on the deck

The gunners of the Radetsky showed great coolness throughout, and more than once recharged their guns with Danish balls, which fell on the deck. One shot entered the ante-chamber leading to the captain's cabin, and, curiously enough, smashed to atoms a portrait of Field Marshal Radetsky, which was hanging on the walls. A second shot made great havoc with the furniture in the captain's cabin. A shell burst in the chamber where the ship's papers were kept, setting fire to them, and doing much irreparable mischief. The total loss of the Radetsky amounted to five killed and 31 wounded.

The Adler and the Blitz, owing to the long range of their guns, sustained no loss, all the Danish shot falling short of their mark.

The engagement, which commenced a few minutes before 2 p. m., was over by 4 p. m.—*Bristol Daily Press.*

THE WAR IN THE STATES.

FROM JAMES RIVER.

MIDNIGHT ATTACK ON GEN. BUTLER'S POSITION.

New York, May 24.—The Herald has the following correspondence from General Butler's column:

Major Gen. Butler's Headquarters in the Field, May 22, 1864.—Shortly before midnight, after nearly every one, worn out with the fatigues of a hard day's work, had gone to rest, a volley of musketry, resembling the distant rumbling of an earthquake, startled all hands, and before the echo died away the heavy booming of cannon took its place and continued for full thirty minutes. Some time before 10 o'clock Gen. Butler received a message from the front that the enemy was massing on our centre, and he replied: "Let them mass; but guard against surprise." This message somewhat prepared us for what was to come, and also kept our valiant troops thus menaced on the alert. Sure enough, as was expected from the enemy, he did mass his forces for one grand assault to pierce our lines, and had we not discovered his intention, the attempt would probably have succeeded. As it was, it resulted in a most disastrous defeat to the foe. Our pickets in front of Gen. Ames's line received the rebel fire with great steadiness, and never flinched. They returned volley for volley, and gradually retired in the reserve. When the rebel column approached, it was received with a most withering fire, and our men dropped to allow the artillery to play on the enemy. The siege guns and light batteries commenced their work then. The advance of the rebels was mowed down like grass, but as usual they came up to the breach like veterans, filling up the gaps as the men fell. Another and another murderous fire from our batteries at last checked them, and the confident foe at last halted in his mad career. Capt. Langley's battery, the 1st U. S. Artillery, played on the rebel force with great effect.

About twenty minutes after the fight had commenced a 20-pound Parrot shell struck and exploded a rebel caision, scattering death and destruction all around. At this sight the most deafening cheers went up from our lines, to the great discomfiture of the rebels. The gunboats on the James and Appotomax rivers also opened their batteries and shelled the woods around, making it decidedly uncomfortable for the rebel reserves. At last when the enemy found we were well prepared for his advance, and having already lost very heavily, he thought it best to withdraw, which he did after giving our mettle a fair and impartial test. The fight lasted about thirty-five minutes, and as soon as it was over our men proceded to bury the rebel killed left on the field.

Yesterday forenoon the rebels made a movement on Fort Powhattan, to attack and capture, if possible, some colored troops stationed there for its defence, and also to keep the enemy from obstructing our navigation of the James River. Col. Baxter, in command, notified Brig. Gen. Hinks of the rebel approach, and asked for reinforcements. Gen. H., commanding the division of colored troops, at once despatched two regiments to the relief of Powhatan, and arrived there in due time to participate in the engagement, which ensued at half past 11 o'clock last night.—Gen. Hinks telegraphed to Gen. Butler, that the rebels were badly repulsed at Fort Powhatan, but stated no particulars.

New York, May 24.—The Tribune has the following, dated near City Point, May 20:

There has been a fierce and sanguinary struggle to-day to regain the rifle pits which the rebels drove us out of yesterday, which so far has been unsuccessful, although we have taken the right of them, which is in the woods. At 9 o'clock the guns from the rebel position opened upon us.—The 9th Maine, with portions of the 4th New Hampshire, 55th Pennsylvania, and 97th New York, were occupying the rifle pits. The rebels charged and were met firmly, but the 9th Maine broke and fled, thus permitting the rebels to flank and compelling us to retire. Two officers of the 9th Maine were summarily dismissed from the service by Gen. Butler, for retiring their men.—The rebels pursued impetuously, but our guns drove them back to the newly acquired pits.—Shortly afterward the 13th Indiana made an imprudent charge on the pits and were repulsed.—During this charge we took Major General Walker, of South Carolina, a prisoner. He had his foot torn off with a shell, and he says his troops ran off and left him. Soon after the 97th Pennsylvania charged with no better success.

At 4 o'clock word came that Howell's brigade occupied the right of the rifle pits. Our losses cannot be estimated. In Infantry they are heavy and probably exceed that of the enemy. Some shells of the 3rd artillery failed to explode. On examination they were found to be filled with plaster.

Later—May 21.—There was some firing today; otherwise all was quiet. It is estimated that there are 25,000 rebel troops in our front.—The loss of the 97th Pennsylvania yesterday was 170, and the 13th Indiana 60.

New York, May 24.—The World's Bermuda Hundred despatch, dated 22nd, says light skirmishing is going on. The attack of the enemy last night was repulsed with great slaughter.—The picket lines are within one hundred yards of each other. Few prisoners were taken by either army. Beauregard was in command and Jeff. Davis was on the field. The works have been materially strengthened by Gen. Weitzel.

RED RIVER AND THE WEST.

It is stated in a Western paper that on the 5th inst., Porter had a large force at work in dredging the river at Alexandria, so as to enable the gunboats to pass over the falls. It would take two weeks to secure the desired result. Smith's troops are to return to Vicksburg, and McClernand's corps, at New Orleans, is to reinforce Banks. Magruder has joined Kirby Smith at Sabine Cross Roads with 24,000 men. Dr. Derby, Surgeon-in-chief with Gen. Banks, reports the Federal loss at Pleasant Hill at 670 killed 1340 wounded, and 1560 missing and prisoners. On the other hand the rebel General Taylor claims to have captured 20 pieces of artillery, many colors, 250 wagons, and 1500 prisoners from Gen. Banks.

By order of the Government, St. Louis is made the headquarters of the West Division of the Cavalry Bureau, with Brigadier General John W. Davidson in command, and Capt. Ingham Coryell, Chief Quartermaster. Since the 26th October last, 17,549 horses have been purchased at the St. Louis depot, at an average cost of $130—aggregate $2,280,000.

LATEST FROM RICHMOND.

Richmond papers of dates as late as May 14, give the Southern version of the great battles, expeditions, raids, &c., which have been fought in Virginia. Full particulars are given of General Sheridan's detour to capture Richmond. His force was so numerous as to drive the Confederates who were opposed to him inside of the outer line of fortifications around the city. President Davis was on the field during a portion of the day, and witnessed the operations in progress. It was in the conflict with Sheridan that Gen. J. E. B. Stuart was killed. He was buried in Richmond on the 13th. Gen. Gordon was also wounded, and the celebrated Col. Henry Clay Pate killed. There was a good deal of hard fighting done, and the loss on both sides is represented as very considerable. Spear's raid to the south side of Richmond resulted in considerable damage to public and private property. The railroads that were cut were speedily repaired. From all the details that are given, it would seem that the Yankees were successfully repulsed and their main object of destroying all railroad communication with Richmond signally defeated, yet the amount of property they destroyed and carried off was very large.

The American War News.—Mr. Secretary Stanton's war despatches form the subject of general remark. It is a melancholy fact, namely, that the Secretary of so important a Department, in a professedly Christian country, should be considered utterly unworthy of credence, as Mr. Stanton undoubtedly is. The public are amused from time to time with forward movements on the part of the Federal armies, and victory after victory achieved by Federal commanders in the field yet still the price of gold—that unerring barometer of military success—goes on advancing. How the Washington Government can make the latter to comport with the former, must certainly puzzle the Philadelphia lawyer of whom the world has heard so much. One would be led to think that, if the army of the Potomac was within a few hours march of Richmond, and flushed with victory, as Mr. Stanton proclaims in his bulletins, the price of gold would at once go down in New York. Instead of this we find, from sources the most reliable, speaking after the manner of men, the precious metal standing unprecedentedly high. Who are the public to believe—the War Department, or the Wall Street Broker?

LATEST FROM MEXICO.

Cairo, May 17.—New Orleans dates of the 11th are received. Gens. Herron, Brenton and Hamilton and a large number of officers, both American and Mexican, had arrived there.

The Mexican Minister of Finance at Matamoras was making arrangements for the support of the Mexican Government.

Gen. Maga is reported to have defeated 8000 French troops at Abuquesque.

The French are reported to be organizing an expedition at San Louis for the invasion of the frontier.

Gen. Vidaura and a number of his officers have fled from Monterey to San Antonio and joined the Southern Confederacy.

Cairo, May 18.—The following additional items are gleaned from New Orleans papers of the 12th:—

Don Manuel Garcia Rejon, the Secretary of Vid uni, arrived at Brownsville on the 26th ult. He was immediately arrested by Gen. Herron, and delivered to the Mexican authorities at Matamoras, with the request that he be not allowed to recross the river, as he had been an enemy to the United States. He was shot on the 27th as a traitor to Mexico.

Col. Vega, the Liberal Governor of Luis Potosi, after routing the traitors under Valentine Cruzo, occupied the city of Revared.

Among the troops recently arrived at Satillo from Monterey, were a number of American volunteers in the Mexican army.

COLONIAL NEWS.

Canada.—The Government have been sustained, by a majority of two, on a motion of the leader of the Opposition, condemnatory of the recent reduction of the canal tolls. Mr. Rankin, who was deprived of his seat at the last general election, but who petitioned against the sitting member, has been restored to his place in Parliament, by an election committee. This result was communicated to the House just previous to the want-of-confidence motion being put; and Mr. Rankin, whose sympathies have heretofore been with the Opposition, contrary to the expectations of his party, voted with the Government, thus saving them from defeat. The Government appear to be pushing forward the business of the country in a vigorous manner, but with so small a majority to sustain them, they are in anything but a good position to advance the interests of this great Colony.—*Acadian Recorder.*

The "Strike" of the colliers at the Sydney Mines is virtually at an end. On the arrival of the detachment of soldiers on the ground, (under the direction of Samuel Macdonnell, Esq., M.P.P.) notice to quit the Company's tenements was given; and the miners proceeded to quietly vacate the houses. Subsequently a large proportion of the men returned to the tenancy of the houses and to their work, at former rates of remuneration. Affairs at the Mines will therefore speedily resume their former prosperous state. The troops sent down returned to town in the *Merlin* on Tuesday evening, their services fortunately not having been brought into requisition.—*Ib.*

The body of a truckman named Patrick Hogan was picked up this afternoon in Collins' Dock It is supposed that the unfortunate man was engaged in hauling lumber off his truck on to the wharf, and losing his *balance*, fell backwards into the water. The men working about the wharf were away to dinner at the time, and the deceased being an elderly man was unable to help himself.—An inquest was held on Tuesday on the body of a private of the 17th Regiment, named Daniel Syren, found drowned in the water near Melville Island. The deceased was one of a party of soldiers stationed on the Island, and it is supposed that while returning to his quarters in an intoxicated condition he had accidentally fallen into the water. A verdict was returned accordingly.—Mrs Tufts, widow of the late James Tufts, an aged woman and a very old resident at the locality on the Eastern side of Halifax Harbour, well known as Tufts' Cover, fell over the wharf at that place on Monday while engaged in drying clothes, and was unfortunately drowned.—*Ib.*

A desperate prize fight came off at Oporto, a little town in Canada West, lately, between two pugilists from Philadelphia; the one named Tessot, a Frenchman, the other an Italian named Cibloni. The latter was much the heavier man of the two, but was left dead in the ring, being killed at the fifty-sixth round, after a contest of nine hours. On the last round, as the ground was slippery and snowy, Tessot's foot slipped and came down upon his knees. Cibloni immediately caught him round the neck and choked him. Tessot, by a desperate effort, raised himself and hurled Cibloni upon his back, placed his knee upon his breast, crushing it completely, and struck him five blows in the face, battering it to one bleeding, shapeless mass. Cibloni expired without a struggle or groan. Tessot is now in a hopeless condition, having been given up by his physician.

The Examiner.

Charlottetown, June 6, 1864.

THE NEWS.

In the dearth of local political topics of an exciting character, demanding immediate notice, we have given up a considerable amount of space to war news from the States, which seems to be the principal subject that engages public attention here as well as elsewhere. The news is very conflicting and confused, and we confess our inability to see our way clearly through it. We heartily wish we could see the end of it. The destruction of life and property seems to proceed upon a gigantic scale—both sides in nearly every conflict are said to sustain great reverses; and neither shows any signs of exhaustion. The Federals, as usual, claim to have the upper hand of the South—their newspapers and telegraphs say they have; but the extraordinary rise in the price of gold to 199 and exchange to 210 indicates a state of affairs that cannot be encouraging to the North.

A Cunning Revenue Transaction.—On account of the hasty and careless manner in which the Revenue Act has been framed, we understand that a Wine importer in this City has lately performed an interesting operation at the Custom House. We will not at present disclose all the particulars which have come to our knowledge, lest we might not be quite correct in regard to some of them; but we may make this general statement, that a large quantity of Wine was entered and received at the warehouse of the Importer on his paying a duty of only ten per cent. on the invoice set down at £20 per pipe each The blunder in the Act enabled the importer to avoid paying four shillings a gallon on the wine, in addition to an *ad valorem* duty of five per cent., and he thus saved a considerable sum of money on the whole importation. Will the Government journals favour the public with the precise facts of this case, and explain the blunder in the Act? If they remain silent on the subject, it will be taken for granted that they are ashamed of having been badly "sold."

Our Spring supply of paper, which has been shipped in the "W. W. Lord," not having yet arrived, we are compelled to use a sheet with a more scanty margin than heretofore used. However, the quantity of printed matter is about the same, and we trust the deficiency of paper will be overlooked for one week.

THE "PRINCESS OF WALES."

The new Steamship "Princess of Wales," built for the Prince Edward Island Steam Navigation Company, arrived here from St. John and Halifax on Wednesday afternoon last. Captain Evans, the well known and popular commander of the Boat, very kindly showed us through all her apartments and offices. She appears to be very substantially constructed; and as regards the fitting out for the accommodation of passengers, she seems to want nothing that an elegant and luxurious taste could suggest. There is no doubt that she is very far in advance of any Steamboat heretofore employed in carrying our Mails; but it must be borne in mind that she is to cost the Colony double the amount given to other Steamboats that have preceded her. However, if she does her work faithfully, and to the satisfaction of the community, and produces a large increase to the trade of the Colony, which she ought to do, the great addition to the outlay for the carrying of the Mails may not appear to be so heavy a burden as it does at present. Everything will depend upon the future action and management of the "Princess of Wales;" and the least we can do at present is to wish her and her owners a full measure of success.

Let him be well known.—The *Protestant* of Saturday last gives the following particulars respecting the swindling transactions of Sergeant O'Brien—(we will not offend either the Regular or the Volunteer Service by styling him "Captain")—to whom we referred in our issue before the last. There is no doubt about the fellow being a very great thief and ruffian generally, and it is the duty of the press to expose his conduct as widely as it can be. Why the *Islander* and *Monitor* have remained silent about the rascal, we are at a loss to understand, unless it is that he was a Government servant, and they are ashamed to make his transgressions known. Both these papers expended a great deal of indignation over D'Arcy when that arch villain absconded; but although O'Brien had not the means of swindling to as large an extent as D'Arcy, he evidently had the will and the *inherent* baseness to do it:—

A Second D'Arcy.—An old pensioner, named O'Brien, came here in 1855 with a company of Newfoundland veterans, and after the corps was disbanded, he was appointed runner to the Public Offices and keeper of the Signal Station. He had a good conduct medal, and discharged his duties to the satisfaction of his employers. So great was the confidence placed in his integrity and honesty that every one trusted him. The Irish Volunteers elected him for their captain, and he was commissioned accordingly. Matters went on very well, until about two weeks ago when it was discovered that he had made his exit rather too suddenly for his numerous creditors. On inquiry it turned out that he was indebted to almost every business man in town. His liabilities altogether are little if anything short of £500.—Among his victims are bakers, grocers, tailors dry goods' merchants, money lenders and government officials. A few days before he ran away, he obtained—or rather his wife, who is as guilty as he is, obtained on his account—in several of the principal stores in the city large quantities of the most valuable goods on credit, including dinner sets, tea sets, glassware, boots, shoes, gloves shawls, dress material, ready made clothing, &c., which will last them for years to come, besides a supply of the best cheese, crackers, ham, wine, brandy, &c., as a "sea-stock for the ould woman," who, he had given out previously, was going to visit her relatives in St. John's, Newfoundland. Whether O'Brien has been guilty of more heinous offences time will tell. It is generally believed that the scamp took passage in the vessel in which the wife went. Should he reach St. John's in safety we would advise the people there to beware of him. He has a commission as Captain of the Irish Volunteers, as well as a certificate of good character from Lieut. Governor Daly. These are dangerous instruments in the hands of a swindler. We therefore warn the Newfoundlanders in time. It is quite likely that O'Brien and the "ould woman" will make a considerable display among their acquaintances in St. John's, but we hope and trust every honest man and woman among them will shun the society of a worthless pair, who have dishonestly obtained all the finery they possess. Even the boots upon the scoundrel's feet, from the way in which they were obtained, may be looked upon as *stolen* goods. Though he managed for a time to comport himself respectably, he was at heart a worthless fellow, and if we are not much mistaken, he will soon come to a bad end. In the meantime, we hope the press will send his real character before him wherever he goes.

The *Vindicator* of Wednesday last gives the following graphic picture of O'Brien:—

"If a Catholic turns traitor to his creed and country, abuses his clergy to tickle Protestant ears, and boasts of *his* independence of priestly rule the evangelicals are delighted, take him by the hand, shower civil and military honors on him, and lend him money from all quarters, until he finds it convenient on some fine morning to "skedaddle" to parts unknown, and leave his swindled dupes to admire the peculiar honesty of a Papist formed according to their hearts."

We have to apologise to our readers for devoting so much of our space to the debates of the Legislative Council, which occurred last Session. It was at the earnest request of several honorable members that we consented to publish them, in conformity with our practice for several years past, none of the other papers, except the *Monitor*, having given insertion to them. We had no idea, however, that the debates of last Session would have been spun out to such an unconscionable length, and made up in a great part of the most tiresome repetition, otherwise we should have declined to fill so many columns with them. However, we have got very nearly to the end, and it is scarcely worth while stopping until we have finished them.

SECOND TRIP OF THE *COMMERCE*.

The Steamer *Commerce* arrived here about midday from Boston and Halifax. She had 45 passengers from Boston to Halifax, and 75 from Halifax to Canseau and Charlottetown. While in Boston her accommodations for passengers were enlarged, so as to enable her to take 30 passengers more than she could before. Other improvements were made upon the *Commerce*, amongst which are a new flange propeller, by which she will be able to run with greater speed. She now sails under the British flag; and we sincerely hope she will deserve the protection and distinction which it is capable of affording.

The Charlottetown Reading Room has recently been fitted up in excellent style. Additional tables, desks, chairs, and gas lights have been provided, and the Room has been newly papered and painted, by which the internal appearance of the building is greatly improved. The latest and most reliable commercial and political intelligence from Europe and America regularly received by telegraph, express, and postal arrangements. The five Quarterly Reviews and Blackwood's Magazine, the London Saturday Review, Daily Times, Maritime Gazette, Illustrated News, Punch, Public Opinion, The Dublin Freeman and Edinburgh Scotsman; the New York Daily Tribune, Scottish American, World, Albion, Scientific American, Brownson's Review, the Boston Advertiser and Journal, are some of the many papers and periodicals received from Europe and America Canadian, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, New Zealand, and all P. E. Island papers are also placed on the tables of the Charlottetown Reading Room, which the Superintendent, Mr. A. McNeill, has, by his energy and enterprise, succeeded in making one of the best institutions of the kind in any of the Provinces.—*Com.*

LATEST BY TELEGRAPH FROM THE SEAT OF WAR IN THE STATES.

St. John, May 30, 1864.

Official despatches announce that Grant's army had withdrawn to the north side of North Ana on Thursday night, moving towards Hanovertown, to cross the Paumunky.

On Friday morning the 1st and 6th corps occupied Hanovertown, and the remainder of the corps were pressing forward rapidly, and would probably be across Paumunky by noon, the weather fine.

The Federal head-quarters were at Mangohich Church.

Breckenridge (Confederate), with a force of several thousand strong, was at Hanover Court House.

A Philadelphia despatch says the Federals crossed the Paumunky east of Saxon's junction.

It is believed that Lee is being largely reinforced from Beauregard's and other armies

The New York *Times'* despatch gives a report that Lee on Thursday night evacuated his position on the South Ana, and was moving towards Richmond.

Prisoners state that Beauregard's army was within Richmond intrenchment.

St. John, May 31.

Secretary Stanton announces that a portion of Butler's forces at Bermuda Hundreds, not required for offensive operations there, under Gen. Smith, has been transferred to the army of the Potomac.

A Fort Monroe despatch of the 29th, says that the 18th army corps and some 10 regiments of the 10th corps are coming down James River. Ten steamers loaded with troops are already passing up York river.

General Canby is actively engaged reshipping troops brought back by Generals Steele and Banks, and is organizing his forces, west of the Mississippi division.

One thousand contrabands, two-third children, arrived at Washington yesterday from the neighbourhood of the recent battle fields. Guerilla batteries continue troubling the navigation of the lower Mississippi.

A portion of Forrest's command has appeared in the vicinity of Union City, Kentucky, within a few days.

Paducah is again excited, with rumors of the approach of Buford's force.

St. John, June 2 (p. m.)

Fortress Monroe despatch says that Grant's communications with White House are now completed.

Richmond papers of the 30th say that they have been underrating General Grant, and manifest fears for Lee's safety.

Message from Gen. Grant reports that the army reached Mechanicsville with but little opposition.

Sheridan routed enemy's cavalry at all points.

Sherman's left reached railroad near Marietta after repulsing an attack. Sherman had been aiming at this point for several days. Additional reinforcements reaching him.

Guerillas attacked train of Union refugees at Salem, Arkansas, destroying the train and killing 80 men and some women.

Herald's despatch says that Secretary Chase is determined to put upon the market from fifty to one hundred millions of 6 per cent. bonds, redeemable after 1881.

Army of the Potomac despatch of the 30th gives further details of Grant's late movement, in which the cavalry performed their part in a most effective manner, encountering Fitz Hugh Lee's cavalry, and driving enemy from their entrenched positions. The advance is near Mechanicsville. Lee's army occupies the trenches about the Meadows and Bottom Bridges. The siege of Richmond has begun.

A Cincinnati despatch reports that Sherman arrived at Dallas on Saturday, and pushed on reinforcements which were to reach McPherson, who was expected to reach Atlanta next Saturday; at last accounts he was within 12 miles.

Johnston, it is reported, crossed the Chattahoochee River, and is falling back on Athens; and Polk, with an army of "all sorts," is retreating to Macon.

St. John, June 3.

Official news received from Grant's headquarters to Wednesday forenoon. It says Tuesday afternoon Sheridan in hard fight routed Fitz Hugh Lee's cavalry, together with Chinaman's brigade of infantry; the 6th corps was sent out at night to occupy the position gained.

Wilson had a fight on Tuesday night near Hanover Court House with Young's brigade of cavalry, routing and capturing many.

Burnside's advanced line within one and a half miles of Mechanicsville

Bermuda Hundred despatch reports yesterday one iron-clad came down James River, attacking Federal monitors;—the iron-clad was driven up the river after two hours' engagement.

Reported Richmond papers admit loss of 1000 in Saturday's fight; one of Sherman's divisions captured Rome on evening of 19th; forty New York soldiers killed by torpedo.

Later.—Official news received from Grant to 7 o'clock Thursday morning, stating that Wednesday p. m. the 6th corps was ordered to make an attack on left at Cole Harbor, and troops under Smith, Warren, Burnside and Hancock being in readiness to advance on their respective fronts, the attack was made with spirit about 5 o'clock, continuing until after dark, resulting in carrying the enemy's works on right of 6th corps, which were held;—also first line in front of Smith; but the latter being commanded by another line in rear, was untenable.

Enemy made repeated assaults on each corps not engaged in main assault; but were repulsed with loss in every instance. During the night the enemy made several assaults to regain what they had lost, but failed.

VERY LATEST.

To the Reading Room and Examiner.

Saturday, June 4, 8.30, P. M.

Secretary Stanton telegraphs despatches received from Grant, dated 3 o'clock, Friday, P. M. No operations took place on Thursday.

Grant reports assailing enemy's lines; yesterday morning driving enemy within entrenchments at all points, but without gaining any decisive advantage; 300 prisoners, mostly Breckenridge, captured.

Later official reports (not from Grant) estimates the number of Federals killed and wounded about 3,000.

Baltimore 'American,' in reference to the above attack, has report that it opened with the fiercest cannonading along the entire line.

Army in best condition and spirits, well supplied, and full of confidence in Grant, declaring him the only man giving them a chance to fight.

Rumored capture of Fitz Hugh Lee unfounded.

In Chicago, the other day, twenty men were drafted who had been dead for several years.

Gen. Ben. Butler has had a million of dollars left him, and has been made a member of the Tract Society.