

Skedaddle

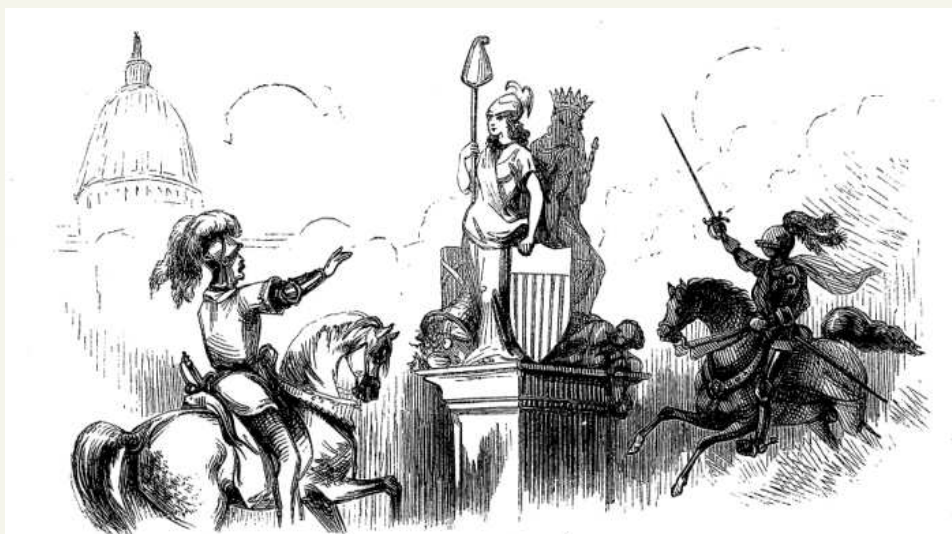
JANUARY 7, 1861

WEEKLY GLIMPSSES FROM
NEWSPAPERS, JOURNALS AND
DIARIES, &C, OF THE TIME

PERSONAL
RECOLLECTIONS OF THE
WAR.
BY A. VIRGINIAN.
[FIRST PAPER.]

IT is with unfeigned reluctance that I have undertaken to write upon subjects which have been so recently and exhaustively treated by contemporaneous pens and pencils; to pass over ground which has been illuminated by the calcium light of the American press; or to touch on questions which have been subjected to the intelligent scrutiny of Congressional Committees; yet I am encouraged by the hope that views taken from an original and somewhat peculiar standpoint may still possess sufficient attraction to jus-

“When this war comes we are to be the borderers; whether it takes the form of a regular and organized contest between governments and sections, or the more dread shape of social and anarchic butchery, this region will be the debatable ground. These fair and fertile fields will be laid waste. Bleak chimneys rising from an ash heap will mark the site of these pleasant homes. Kindred will be divided by the sword. Ancient friendships changed to bloody feuds; peace, security, and plenty give place to war, watchfulness, and famine. And yet no upright and sound-thinking man can give a human reason why this war should be.”



tify their publication, and that a personal narrative, with all its incidental trivialities, errors, inconsistencies, and egotism, may find an acceptable apology in the superior interest of the grand historic drama with which it is interwoven.

A native of the valley of the Shenandoah, I have passed the greater part of my life on the Northern border of Virginia—a region which, from its geographical position and mixed population, has always been debatable ground between the contending opinions of the age, and which eventually became a most important theatre of the war, resulting from these opinions. It is thus that I became, almost from necessity, an interested observer of many of the opening scenes of the contest, and subsequently an active participator in its armed solution.

During the winter of 1860-61 I was residing at my father's house in Martinsburg, occupied with my private affairs and arranging plans for a future of peace and seclusion. These dreams were disturbed from time to time by the indications of the approaching storm, but I resolutely closed my eyes and stopped my ears, determined not to be disturbed. I had never taken any active interest in the party politics of the day, and was the less disposed to mingle in the present strife, as I sympathized with neither of the extreme factions which, from opposite quarters, seemed to be mutually intent on breaking down the Government and destroying the peace and prosperity of the country. I saw nothing in the contest but the rage of adverse dogmatisms, sharpened by the baser lust for official plunder—that party spirit, which, Addison says, “robs men, not only of all honor and decency, but of every particle of common sense.”

In the rapid progress of events, however, it became manifest that the questions before the country were not to be put aside with this cynical and superficial observation. Under a monarchy a subject may be permitted to seclude himself from the political storms that shake thrones and menace dynasties. Even amidst the fury of war he can calmly pursue some favorite science with reasonable assurance that his motive and character will be respected. The citizen of a free Republic can claim no such privilege. “The price of his personal liberty is eternal vigilance.” Under whatever pretext he may seek to hide himself or evade the responsibilities of his condition, when the storm rises he is sure to feel his neighbor's hand upon his shoulder, and hear the cry of warning and reproach: “What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise and call upon thy God.”

It was, indeed, high time that the Border Virginians should awake, for the gulf that was opening between the adverse sections yawned beneath their very hearths; and the sword which was drawn to divide the nation must also cut their hearts in twain. When, at length, impelled to the serious consideration of the impending crisis, I can not boast, as many do, that I clearly appreciated the merits of the quarrel or foresaw its results. Preferring to preserve a reputation for frankness to the doubtful honor of being enrolled among the *ex post facto* prophets, I am fain to acknowledge (in the phraseology of tobacco planters) that I had very few opinions “ready cut and dry” for the occasion. I heard nothing but a confusion of tongues such as followed the destruction of Babel. I saw nothing but political chaos which seemed about to swallow up government, law, life, and property together. There had been a prevalent and growing conviction among what were called Conservative men, especially at the South, that the experiment of popular Government was a failure. Macaulay had written a letter to some one proph-

syng that the American system would break clown on the first serious trial. I shared this belief to some extent. The revolutionary anarchy which was spreading like a fire from State to State, the seeming helplessness of the General Government, the chaos of opinion—all combined to convince me that the predicted day of trial had arrived, and that it needed no Daniel to interpret the handwriting on the wall.

Impressed at the same time with the belief that we were entering upon an era which would figure in history, I determined to take advantage of my position to observe the progress of events and to keep a Diary.

This promise, however, was but negligently performed at first. During the winter of 1860-61 I find nothing recorded beyond an occasional comment, opinion, or anecdote suggested by the current news, and these jotted down hastily, without date or continuity. In time my journal became more methodical, and after I entered the military service was as full and accurate as possible under the circumstances.

In preparing these notes for the press I have endeavored to preserve all the freshness and personality which pertain to the original manuscript. If some things have been omitted (that might be worth the telling, in place and season), and certain obscure passages made clearer by the light of after-knowledge, in the main the recorded facts and opinions of the day remain unchanged. There will appear the uncertain gropings, the vacillations, the inconsistencies of opinion, the errors of hasty and partial observation, the vain hopes, the causeless fears, the embittered prejudices, and excited passions which necessarily accompany the progress of a political revolution, so radical and comprehensive, accomplished through a social war so bloody and vindictive as that which has recently ended.

It will be also seen that in writing these individual experiences it is not proposed to emulate the dignity and comprehensiveness of history, but to give closer and more detailed views of characters and events, a series of photographic pictures hastily caught, during the action of the changing drama. Scenes where the greatness of little things, and the littleness of great things, will sometimes be strikingly illustrated by juxtaposition, where tragedy and comedy, laughter and tears, frenzy and farce walk arm in arm together. And it may be that a more thoughtful class who would look behind the creaking machinery and tinsel actors of the drama, may find in these crude and unskillful observations suggestion of queries which will be found as difficult to answer as those of the poet laureate :

—Shall error in the round of time
Still father truth? O shall the braggart shout
For some blind glimpse of freedom work itself
Through madness, hated by the wise, to law,
System, and empire? Sin itself be found
The cloudy porch, oft opening on the sun?"

Having thus indicated the geographical and political stand-point from which my opening views of the war were taken, I commence transcribing from my Diary.

..... South Carolina has actually seceded! and what of that? South Carolina is a great way off; and has been threatening Secession for thirty years or more. The Toryism of 1776 has never died out in South Carolina, nor have her gentry ever fully acquiesced in

our republican form of government. It is high time the questions between her and the country were settled. I wish she had made up her mind to try conclusions with Andrew Jackson, when she had her hand raised to pluck the forbidden fruit. Does she think it more nearly ripe now? or that the present "Old Man" won't throw stones? I'll vouch for it, that if he does not, somebody will.

.....I am rather glad South Carolina has taken this decisive step. Her arrogance and rashness have arrayed even her Southern neighbors against her. She will not be supported by a single State. I have not heard a voice raised in her behalf. Even those who have heretofore been most vociferous about Southern rights unite in condemning her premature presumption. A ship of war in the harbor of Charleston, and a battalion of national troops thrown into the forts, will quench South Carolina as briefly as one may snuff out a tallow dip with his thumb and finger.

....."Sedition is like fire, easily extinguished at the commencement, but the longer it burns the more fiercely it blazes."

.....South Carolina is not quenched, and there seems to be no disposition on the part of those in power to put the extinguisher on her.

.....As she pursues her course of presumptuous madness with impunity other States are following her example.

.....Each day brings tidings of fresh outrages and humiliations heaped upon the Government, seizures of arsenals, arms, forts, dock-yards, and vessels—of traitorous officers surrendering their charges without defense—of faithful officers arrested and thrown into prison, besieged in forts where they are cut off from supplies and assistance—our national flag hauled down and trampled in the dust, with all its glorious historic memories, to be replaced by some tawdry rag flaunting an obscure device known only to local office-holders and militia-men.

The effect of this state of things is distinctly perceptible in the tone of opinion around us. State Sovereignty dogmatism is becoming daily more open and arrogant. County court metaphysicians are modifying their Unionism with *ifs* and *ands* and *peradventures*—small anglers in the mud-puddle of village tavern opinion are drawing in their lines and changing their bait—petty politicians are craftily trimming their sails that their cock-boats may run with the rising wind. But while the weak-kneed are thus tottering, and trimmers fluttering in the breeze, the storm serves to fan to fiercer flame the indignation of all true men. All eyes and hearts are now turned toward Washington, expectant, eager, hopeful. There centres the power which in its infancy has met and twice foiled the giant of Great Britain, which in the very wantonness of its lusty youth made a holiday frolic of throttling poor Mexico. What will the Government do in this crisis?

.....Is it secret sympathy with treason or, mere driveling that tells the American people "the Government has no right to coerce a State?"—a nation that for more than eighty years has maintained fleets and armies, has waged wars and made peace, has collected customs and coined money; whose commerce covers the globe, whose flag is known and honored wherever the sun shines; whose power and civilization are acknowledged by the proudest and most enlightened peoples; whose future promises to surpass in grandeur all that history has yet recorded. Such a nation has not the right to suppress domestic insurrection! So vast an aggregation of power, prosperity, and hope

ask for the possession of the forts.

DECEMBER (20,) South Carolina Convention passes the ordinance of secession and declares the State an independent Republic. (26,) Major Anderson dismantles and evacuates in the night fort Moultrie, and takes position at fort Sumter, (27,) South Carolina troops take possession of forts Moultrie and Pinkney. (29,) Floyd, Secretary of War, resigns; President Buchanan sustains Major Anderson.

January 1, 1861

THE CHARLESTON MERCURY

THE MILITARY MOVEMENTS are progressing rapidly all around us. The brave sons of Carolina, cheered by the encouragement of her equally courageous daughters, are earnestly and silently doing all that men can do towards putting our State in a position to defend herself against the world. For the present, we refrain from giving the particulars of the various works that are progressing. We will only say, for the benefit of anxious friends, that the gallant volunteers stationed at the various posts around us, are, one and all, devoting themselves to fill the exigencies of a noble cause, and that they are and will doubtless continue in high spirits and as comfortable circumstances permit.

RICHMOND ENQUIRER

RESIGNATION OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR

The resignation of Secretary Floyd, which was tendered on Saturday night last, will be deeply regretted by the people of Virginia. Under the circumstances, Secretary Floyd has done only what every high toned gentleman would have done.

The Administration had given an unqualified pledge, to the Representatives from South Carolina, that no reinforcements should be sent to the Forts, and that their status should not be changed, if the authorities and people of South Carolina would make no attempt to seize the Forts. South Carolina gave the pledge, and, what is more, honorably observed it. Under its operation peace was preserved, and the peace commissioners from that State were in to violate that pledge, to change the [] of the forts, and to hazard the peace of the country. Gov. Floyd considered this action of Maj. Anderson as violating the pledge of the administration, and ruinous to the policy which, under the pledge of the President, had preserved the peace. The reoccupation of Fort Moultrie by Major Anderson, Secretary Floyd considered just and proper, and made it the condition of his longer remaining in the Cabinet. The President admitting the pledge, yet refused to order Major Anderson to Fort Moultrie, and Secretary Floyd would no longer remain a member of the Administration which would permit its subordinate officer, by violating its pledge, to ruin its policy and involve the country in civil war. He, therefore, resigned; and the people in Virginia, while deeply regretting his loss to the War Department at this time, will yet sustain him in his action. If the rumor be true that Gen. Scott has been appointed to the War Department, with his previous declarations against the South, it will speedily involve the country in civil war—indeed, we should not be surprised if individual action did not precipitate Virginia into collision with the Federal Government.

DIARY OF A YANKEE IN THE PATENT OFFICE

Washington D.C.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 1, 1861.

The old year passed away in gloom and sadness and the new one opens today without affording one hopeful ray of light in regard to the future. There seems to be a determination on the part of nearly the whole south to break up the Government. The Comrs from S.C. are still here and little is known in the City about what is taking place between them and the President & Cabinet. The "receptions" today as well as the "Calls" were few and rather solemn affairs. Pleasant day, just freezing

January 2, 1861

NEW YORK HERALD

THE CRISIS.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 2, 1861.

The President's reply to the Commissioners of South Carolina has just been communicated. They demanded, as a preliminary step to the initiation of negotiations, that the troops be withdrawn from the forts in Charleston harbor.

The President positively refuses to do this, and reiterates his views in reference to the public property as set forth in his message to Congress, and informs them that he not only intends to collect the revenues and execute the laws, but to defend the property of the United States with all the power at his command.

He does not recognize the Commissioners officially, but regards them as distinguished citizens of the United States from South Carolina.

The orders to Major Anderson are given in full.

From them it appears he could only have acted as he has done, and certainly, if he had any tangible evidence that South Carolina designed taking Fort Sumter.

The policy pursued and the understanding had with the people of South Carolina up to the evacuation of Fort Moultrie are given, and the people of the United States will now understand what kind of pledges existed between the President and the authorities of South Carolina, and whether South Carolina will be sustained, even by the South, in taking possession of property which does not belong to her.

The position taken by the President has produced the utmost consternation among the Commissioners and their friends.

Instructions have been sent to the commander of the steam frigate Brooklyn, to put her in readiness and be prepared to leave at a moment warning.

The question of reinforcement has not yet been fully determined upon, but should an attack be made upon Fort Sumter a large force will at once be dispatched.

The Commissioners have telegraphed Governor Pickens all the particulars of the President's letter, and also that they are satisfied that the President had determined to reinforce Major Anderson. They further urge upon the Governor to put the State upon a war footing, and to concentrate all his force at once.

A brief though earnest address to the people of the United States has been prepared, recommending them to rally a compromise on the basis of the propositions of

Senators Crittendon and Bigler; it has already been signed by a number of members of both houses of Congress.

The members of Congress who have just returned from visits to their homes in the border slave States express their alarm at the progress of the secession movement, while others from some of the non-slaveholding States represent the people as rapidly and earnestly consolidating in the opposite direction.

The most intimate friends of the President say that it is his present determination not to remand Anderson to Fort Moultrie.

Certain Southerners were openly indignant today, under the belief that troops have been ordered to Charleston harbor, and it is said that they telegraphed to the South accordingly. If any such order was given it was revoked.

A report that the South Carolina Commissioners were to be treated to a calithumpian serenade caused a considerable police force to repair to and stay in their neighborhood all night to prevent it; but it was altogether a false alarm.

It is not true, as has been reported, that the Committee of Thirty three have accepted Mr. Crittenden's proposition, but some of the members are yet hopeful that they may arrive at some general agreement.

DIARY OF A YANKEE IN THE PATENT OFFICE

Washington D.C.

Matters look more hopeful for the Country today. It is now known that the President refused to acknowledge the Commissioners as being anything more than distinguished citizens from the State of S.C. Their last communication to him yesterday was returned to them unanswered. It struck them like a bomshell it was so unexpected. They and their secession friends here were in great consternation. The "Embassadors!" left for home immediately, and now that the Prest has taken a stand. Every body feels better altho a war is ahead. The weather is cold and unpleasant today.

January 3, 1861

THE CHARLESTON MERCURY

THE PROGRESS OF THE REVOLUTION.

Every effort of the General Government to avert its dissolution, only hastens on its fate. Major ANDERSON abandons Fort Moultrie and garrisons Fort Sumter. The President approves and the Northern press praises the achievement. The New York EVENING POST even declares that this step to coercion raises the price of Stocks in New York. But what follows in the South, where the great game of disunion is going on? The people of South Carolina are made more resolute in their determination to throw off the Government. Our city is like an armed camp. Martial music fills the air. Offers of assistance come by thousands from the neighboring States. Fort Moultrie, Castle Pinckney, Fort Johnson, and the United States Arsenal, are occupied with our troops. Disciplined companies are arriving by the railroad from the interior of the State. The Governor of Georgia seized the United States forts commanding the harbor of Savannah. The Georgia elections, with the voice of a tempest, sweeps before it the flying

chaff of Unionism and fear, and proclaims that the Union must be dissolved. In a few more days Florida, Alabama and Mississippi will have cast off all political connection with the North, and all the fortresses on the Atlantic and in the Gulf, from Cape Fear to the Mississippi, will have the stars and stripes forever taken down from their flagstaves. So works the threats of coercion of the South. And how is it at the North? Congress has been in session a month, and not a single measure of coercion has been proposed, much less passed, in Congress. The Black Republicans seem to be content to abuse the President as a traitor, because he does not enter upon the enterprise of conquering the South with one thousand men, being the whole force at his command from Boston to New Orleans. They know that the President is just as helpless as they are, to coerce the Southern States into the Union; and yet, they bray out their assinine abuse, with all the force of baffled hate and raging imbecility. Scheme after scheme, to keep the Union together, is formed, and bursts like bubbles on a fretful tide. Every day brings its proof of the steady progress of the Government of the United States to dissolution, and of the South to union, whilst every effort made to avert this inevitable drift of things, only accelerates them to their final consummation. Not to act is fatal and to act is more speedily fatal. So, why not at once acquiesce in the destiny of things—pitch the account book of the Union into the fire; and take down the new account book of a Southern Confederacy? Then, spread out its fair pages, for a glorious history of independence, prosperity, and liberty. As to the North, —let it go over to Canada—or break up into an Eastern, and Middle, and Western Confederacy—all inferior in power, wealth and civilization, to the great predominating Republic of the Slaveholding States of North America. Can they help themselves? We will see.

THE WORK GOES BRAVELY ON.

We learn that 150 able bodied free colored men, of Charleston, yesterday offered their services gratuitously to the Governor, to hasten forward the important work of throwing up redoubts wherever needed along our coast.

POSTS OF DUTY—WHICH?

In the military enthusiasm now pervading our city, it is difficult to keep young men who have responsible posts of business, in which the public are concerned, at their work. The rage for volunteering or active service is so great, that we, in the MERCURY office, have had the utmost difficulty in restraining our clerks, printers and employees, and keeping them in this branch of the public service. In vain, in some instances, have we urged the necessity of furnishing with promptitude and certainty the intelligence so eagerly sought by all, and making the moral fight so essential to the cause of the South in the world of ideas. Nothing but a place in the hosts of battle will suit their unreasoning ardor. Although thousands, whose duties at this juncture are not generally missed, are offering their services to the State, we find a strong inclination for stampede to the war. Under these circumstances, we must crave indulgence of the public for any shortcoming.

In addition to our own troubles, we learn, too, that the Postmaster is left in the same dilemma from the same cause, and that allowances must be made in the delivery of the mail.

NEW YORK HERALD

THE CRISIS IN WASHINGTON - THE PRESIDENT'S REPLY TO THE SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. Buchanan's administration is coming out of this fiery ordeal of revolution as fine gold from the furnace. His reply to the South Carolina Commissioners, as indicated in our Washington despatches, brings him forward in full relief as the man who rightly comprehends his position, his responsibilities and the expectations of the American people.

The three South Carolina Commissioners in question presented themselves to the President as ambassadors from a foreign government. Mr. Buchanan tells them that he can only recognize them as distinguished citizens of the United States from South Carolina. They demanded, as the first preliminary step to their contemplated negotiations, the withdrawal of the federal troops from the forts at Charleston. Mr. Buchanan tells them that he not only intends to collect the revenue and execute the federal laws in South Carolina as in other parts of the Union, but that he will defend the property of the federal government with all the power at his command. Thus, as Chief Magistrate of the United States, sworn to support the constitution thereof, Mr. Buchanan rises to the full standard of his official obligations to the country.

We are gratified that our confidence in him, as a statesman and a patriot, is thus vindicated before the world. Had he made his own well considered views and opinions upon public affairs the laws of his Cabinet from the beginning, it would have saved him a world of trouble. He should never have permitted his late Secretary of the Treasury, for instance, to urge upon Congress a tariff policy in direct conflict with that of the head of the government. If the unity of the Cabinet upon that subject demanded the removal of Mr. Cobb, he should have been removed at once. Mr. Floyd, too, as Secretary of War, should have been dismissed upon the discovery that he had been dabbling in army transportation jobs and fort site speculations to the prejudice of the administration. Had Mr. Buchanan, resisting his own generous feelings, followed the examples of Gen. Jackson in this matter of a loyal Cabinet, even to the extent, if necessary, for the first year or two, of a new Cabinet every six months, there would have been no ministerial imbecilities and desertions and no astounding discoveries of frauds in the executive departments now in the hour of trial and danger.

But, returning to the main question, the inquiry naturally arises, does this ultimatum of Mr. Buchanan to South Carolina inaugurate a civil war? We hope not. The President desires to avoid an appeal to arms. He will seek, as he has sought by all available means of conciliation and forbearance, to preserve peace. The South Carolina Convention, on the receipt of his ultimatum to their Commissioners, may proceed to extreme measures. It is probable, however, that the strength of Fort Sumter will suggest the expediency of delay in that quarter, and that a vessel of war or two will be able to look after the federal revenues at Charleston, without any warlike collision with the local authorities. Under a rigid interpretation of the constitution, the President might proceed to the arrest, not only of the South Carolinians in occupation of federal property in a warlike attitude, but to the seizure of those three Commissioners, on charges of treason. The President, however, acting under the fraternal considerations of good will and rec-

conciliation, will overlook everything in this business except the overt act of war against the United States.

We would therefore kindly admonish our fellow citizens of South Carolina to the exercise on their part of the saving virtues of reflection and forbearance. They may yet secure all that is necessary for their protection and safety, as a community, whether in or out of the Union, without war. On the other hand, a resort to war may be more disastrous to South Carolina, from her exposed situation, than to any other State of the Union. The people of that State, in common with our Southern brethren generally, have just causes of complaint against the ant-slavery spirit and power of the North. But there is a way of redress, even in the resort to secession, without resorting to war. Let all the Southern States, for instance, meet together in convention and adopt such amendments to the federal constitution as they may think indispensable to their future security and welfare, and upon this basis let them form a new Union. Let it at first be limited to the Southern States, but open to all the other States on the condition of the adoption by each of this new constitution, and we will answer for the best results. We believe that a Southern movement of this comprehensive character would soon bring the Central States and the Western States into a happy accord with the Southern States. The New England States might hold out, and the best thing that could be done with them would probably be to assist them in the experiment of a little Puritanical confederacy all to themselves. Despairing of any relief for the Union from this factious and incompetent Congress, and of any seasonable propositions in behalf of peace and harmony from the President elect—who seems to understand neither his position nor the condition of our public affairs—we present to the Southern States our proposition for a Southern National Convention, a new constitution, and a reconstruction of the Union upon a new Southern basis.

To this end we appeal to the local authorities and to the people of South Carolina to delay yet a little longer the ruinous alternative of the sword. There is a limit beyond which the President cannot forbear; he has indicated it. Let not that limit be hastily passed by those to whom it is addressed, if they would escape the sweeping disasters of civil war.

DIARY OF A YANKEE IN THE PATENT OFFICE

THURSDAY 3

The affairs of the Country appear so desperate that the subject engrosses the attention of all men in all places. Public questions are discussed in my room at the patent office full as much as applications for Patents. It is frequently asked what patents will be worth if the Union is dissolved. But applications continue to be made from both north and south, altho there is something of a falling off. Tomorrow is the Fast day recommended by the Prest of the U.S. Offices closed.

January 4, 1861

RICHMOND ENQUIRER

EXCITEMENT.

This city was never before within our recollection, in such a state of excitement. The all-absorbing topic of conversation is the action of South Carolina, and on every man's lips there is an eager cry of 'What's the news?'—and bulletin boards are watched for each new message, with intense eagerness. Let all our readers North understand this plainly, that the excitement here is not that of fear or submission. On the contrary, there is the utmost determination on all hands that this State shall never be pressed by the foot of an invader without resistance being offered to the very death. —Let it be understood, too, that South Carolina has the sympathy of the immense bulk of our citizens, and that she will be assisted and fought for to the bitter end. Some time ago there was an idea abroad, that there was a large body of submissionists among us, but that idea is now, indeed, a fallacy. 'Fight' is in every man's mouth, and whoever assaults this old State will be encountered by such an uprising of our people, as will prove her to be a faithful and most loyal devotee of the motto on her banner—'Sic Semper Tyrannis'—fighting for our homes and firesides, for State Rights and the rights of the South. We have a just cause, and for that cause we will do battle, every man of us, with all the power and strength in us.

NEW YORK HERALD

THE NEWS.

The reports from the South are again of a startling character. It is announced from Georgia that the Governor of that State has seized and garrisoned with militia the forts in the harbor of Savannah, and there is reason to believe that a plan has been matured by the secessionists for taking possession of all the fortifications on the Southern coast. The intelligence from Charleston is to the effect that Fort Sumter is besieged, that Major Anderson's communications have been cut off, that Fort Moultrie has been repaired, that new batteries have been erected, and that everything is in readiness to open fire on the federal forces. The Florida Convention met yesterday. Without doubt this body will pass a secession ordinance as soon as the formalities can be gone through with. The federal Judge of Florida has resigned his commission.

A large and brilliant audience assisted at M. Du Chailler's lecture before the Geographical and Statistical Society, Clinton Hall, last evening. M. Du Chailler gave an interesting account of his adventures in Africa and of his encounters with the gorilla. From the formation of the brain and of the back bone, the organism of which was entirely different in the man and the ape, it was M. Du Chailler's opinion that men never were and never could become apes, and vice versa. Of the slave trade he said the negroes of the interior thought that all white men were alike, and that they bought slaves to eat them. Masters there had perfect control over the lives of their slaves, but granted them every privilege. The negroes were sold for crime or for debt. The slaves brought to the coast said that there was a cloven footed tribe in the interior, but Du Chailler did not believe it. The thanks of the Society were voted the lecturer for his very interesting paper.

DIARY OF A YANKEE IN THE PATENT OFFICE

FRIDAY, JANUARY 4, 1861.

A Mild and pleasant day but I think people feel much like wearing sackcloth and observing the day as recommended. There has been services at most of the churches which were crowded. Myself and wife went to the Capitol to hear Doct Stockton the Chaplin at the "House." The Hall of Congress was crowded to excess and the services were very solemn. The "Rattle Snake" and the "pitiful Palmetto" even alluded to in connection with the "Eagle" and the glorious "Stars and Stripes." Stores &c all closed.

January 5, 1861

THE CHARLESTON MERCURY

MILITARY.

A detachment of the Richardson Guard, Lieut. C.H. AXSON, were out on duty Sunday afternoon. Another platoon passed the MERCURY office yesterday afternoon, under the command of Lieut. BOAG.

The detachment of Citadel Cadets who have been on the seashore since the first of January, passed our office yesterday on their way to the Citadel, to resume their studies. By their skill and energy the first battery was erected for the defence of Charleston: by their admirable gunnery Federal insolence was checked, and the Star of the West, with her warlike crew, was sent back without having accomplished her stealthy mission. It is well that their duties on the field should now be changed to that of the Academy. They will be thus enabled to make preparation for the future. The Executive knows full well, that at the tap of the drum lads in gray will answer to roll call and gladly receive the order, 'Forward!' particularly if a visit is to be paid to Capts. DOUBLEDAY or FOSTER, in Fort Sumter. The Cadets were escorted to the steamer, on their departure, by the Washington Light Infantry, who turned out in large numbers, as a compliment to their old friends. As soon as the steamer started, the Washington Light Infantry gave three cheers, which the Cadets returned with a tiger. They will be missed by the entire garrison, for their places cannot be well supplied.

The Palmetto Riflemen, Capt. MELCHERS, in a gray fatigue suit, passed through Broad street on parade yesterday; the ranks were full, and we doubt not the Captain and his command are ready for any emergency that may arise.

Washington Light Infantry. —Rev. A. TOOMER PORTER, Chaplain —in spite of the rain storm —paid his accustomed visit to the Washington Light Infantry's quarters, on Sunday afternoon, where divine service was performed. Owing to the inclemency of the weather, the Chaplain was persuaded to remain over night, and, we learn, was comfortably cared for until Monday morning. A strong attachment has grown up between this command and their chaplain.

On Monday, Major CAPERS called for twenty volunteers from the Washington Light Infantry, to take the place, temporarily, of the Cadets, in one of the batteries, and upon requesting all so disposed to step three paces to the front, the entire company moved forward. We learn that the Major at once proceeded to the battery with the men and commenced drilling them to the use of the heavy guns. The health of the troops on

Morris Island is good, and the men manage to keep dry in spite of the drenching rains.

THE GEORGETOWN RIFLE GUARD— COMMENDABLE LIBERALITY.

We learn that P.D.J. WESTON, Esq; has presented to the Georgetown Rifle Guard, Captain E.J. WHITE, one hundred and twenty of the fine English weapon known as the 'Enfield Rifle' with accoutrements and ammunition ample for a long campaign, besides placing funds at the disposal of the company. The Georgetown Guard, composed of many of the first citizens of that place now numbers eighty four, rank and file. The members are making every exertion to place themselves upon a war footing, and they expect to be ordered by detachments to take charge of the fortifications now being erected at the entrance of the harbor by the planters under the superintendence of L.F. LEBLEUX and E.J. WHITE.

ANOTHER RESIGNATION.

It is our pleasing duty to record, this morning, the patriotic course of another son of South Carolina, in the resignation, some days since, of Mr. WILLIAM WILKINSON, from the Naval School at Annapolis. The opportunity of a naval education and position have thus voluntarily been abandoned from a high sense of duty, and of proper State pride.

NEW YORK HERALD

THE NEWS.

Yesterday was observed as a day of humiliation, fasting and prayer for our national transgressions, in accordance with the recommendation of the President. In this city business was almost entirely suspended, and the churches were crowded with worshippers. We give in our columns this morning the sermons, addresses and prayers delivered by Revs. Drs. Vinton, Raphall, Adams, Gallandet, Hawkes, DeWitt, Williams, Tyng, Spring, White, Hoge, Chapin, Thompson, Bethune, Chamcey, Beecher, J. C. Smith, Hogany, Van Dyke, Taylor and Bellows, together with a report of the sermon delivered by Rev. Mr. Stockton in the venerable Chaplain to Congress, in the hall of the House of Representatives. These reports embrace the views of the Episcopalians, Unitarians, Old and New School Presbyterians, Methodists, Dutch Reformed, Baptists, Fannatico—Massachusetts and Hebrews, on the perilous condition of the nation, and will doubtless receive from our readers the attention they deserve.

The government arsenal at Mobile was seized by the Alabama State troops at daylight yesterday morning. It contained a large quantity of munitions of war. it was rumored at Mobile that Fort Morgan was captured on Thursday night.

From South Carolina we have a list of the members of Gov. Pickens' Cabinet. The following are the names: -

Secretary of State—A. G. Magrath

Secretary of War—D. F. Jamison

Secretary of the Treasury—C. G. Memminger

Secretary of the Interior—A. G. Garlington

Postmaster General—W. H. Harlee.

The South Carolina Commissioners have left Washington to report to the con-

vention the result of their negotiations with the President. It is expected that important events will follow their report.

The announcement of the occupation of the fort at Beaufort by order of the Governor of North Carolina is not confirmed, and there is reason to believe that the report to that effect was without foundation. In our Washington despatches may be found the programme of the secessionists for taking possession of all the public property, including forts, dockyards, barracks, arsenals, &c., along the Southern coast from Cape Henry to Texas.

The pony express, with San Francisco dates to December 22, arrived at Fort Kearney on Thursday night. The advices by this arrival report business in San Francisco is still continuing exceedingly dull. The President's Message overtook the outgoing party at Kearney on the 7th of December, being telegraphed entire from St. Louis. By the pony it arrived at Sacramento on the 19th, whence it was telegraphed to San Francisco, and published in the papers of that city on that day, together with the proceedings of Congress down to the 7th. The steamship Sonora sailed from San Francisco on the 22nd of December for Panama, with \$1,467,219 in treasure on board, of which \$1,446,000 are for New York. The dates from Oregon are to December 11, British Columbia to the 8th, and Sandwich Islands to the 1st. The details will be found in another column.

DIARY OF A YANKEE IN THE PATENT OFFICE

SATURDAY 5

People were startled today to hear that the U.S. Forts and Arsenals at Savannah & Mobile had been taken possession of by the Revolutionists. Where this is all to end God only knows. It looks dark for our Country at present. But there is still a strong feeling that the Government will be upheld. This City is threatened and the Citizens do fear that a Mob will have possession of it unless measures are taken to defend it; incendiary fires occur every night and we feel very unsafe.

January 6, 1861

NEW YORK HERALD

OUR WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENCE.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 4, 1861.

There are no facts here. An event today is nothing tomorrow, and the scene shifts every hour. The storm is tremendous; but I think it will end without desolating the country. There are many unreasonable men at both extremes - men of precipitation and madness. But in the midst of all their talk I can see that they are not yet ready for savage action. The South Carolina Commissioners were calm, determined, resolute and did not yield any point. It is as well now, that they should not. In all my talk with them I was surprised at the strength of their position. The South generally is equally determined, not so hasty, but just as resolute, and firmly determined to accept no terms but those which will secure all their rights in some form or other.

There is much talk by Northern men who come here of a united feeling for pro-

tecting the federal flag and preserving the federal property. This will be done. The President will protect all the property in his power, and will undoubtedly arm the District against mobs. Yet after he shall have accomplished all in his power, the naked truth will be made more manifest, that, in consequence of the inactivity and imbecility of Congress the great array of strength will be on the side of the South. Georgia has occupied Fort Pulaski. This is the strongest position on our coast, and a small State force can prevent its being retaken, even if the united strength of our whole navy were brought against it. Pensacola is equally impregnable. If the people of new Orleans occupy the defenses at the mouth of the Mississippi, the navy of Great Britain could not dislodge them. Fort Henry in the hands of Virginia and Fort McHenry in possession of the militia of Maryland, would abundantly protect the seaboard of those two States. Mr. Buchanan has not now nor has he ever had, disposable troops to hold these places properly. How idle, foolish and absurd then it is to prattle about coercion.

It is the fashion here, as everywhere, to throw the onus of our present position on the administration. The staple of talk of members of both houses of Congress is abuse of the President for not having done what he could not do, and what but for the sheer stupidly and negligence of our national representatives would have been long since accomplished. The movement to take possession of the District of Columbia and prevent the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln is based upon the supposed necessity on the part of Virginia to take the lead in the Southern movement to recent her own interest from going to the devil. Every man in Washington believes the attempt will be made; still, not one member of Congress here had the boldness and patriotism to propose an act empowering the calling out of militia from adjoining States to secure peace in the capital. The administration fights single handed against surrounding difficulties. With nerve and statesmanship to aid him, Mr. Buchanan could become master of the situation in a fortnight; but he is shackled, impeded and prostrated by those who ought to be his most efficient support.

ABE LINCOLN, THE RAIL SPLITTER, AS A CABINET MAKER.

Honest Old Abe Lincoln, whose achievements as a splitter of rails now form part of the history of the country, has latterly been engaged in a new line of business, a rather higher branch of woodwork, to wit: - the manufacturing of Cabinets. There is all the difference in the world between splitting timber and putting it together; and we are not at all surprised to see that the opponents of Lincoln declare persistently that he is still at his old business of disintegration; that he has split the country in twain, and that all his Cabinet making will amount to nothing. On the contrary, it is quite natural that the friends of Lincoln should insist that he is a first rate Cabinet maker, and that he will manage to glue the North and South together and dovetail the Union so that all the seams and crack will be as smooth as if they had never been exposed to the fire of secession.

Of course the result of Old Abe's first attempts at Cabinet making will be looked for with the utmost impatience by the country. Hon. Massa Greeley, who ought to be posted about the affair, gives the following list of Lincoln's journeymen:

State—Wm. H. Seward, of New York
Treasury —Salmon P. Chase, of Ohio

Attorney Genera—Edward Bates, of Missouri
War—Simon Cameron, of Pennsylvania
Navy—Robert E. Scott, of Virginia
Interior—Wm. A. Graham, of N. Carolina.
Postmaster General—Gideon Welles, of Connecticut

The first stick of timber brought to Springfield for Lincoln's inspection was old Mr. Bates, of Missouri—a beautiful fossil, round, smooth, and in very excellent preservation. Old Mr. Bates is susceptible of a very high degree of polish, and therefore was accepted without hesitation. Next came Proviso Wilmot, of Pennsylvania, who was pressed for the Treasury Department; but being measured, weighed and tried by all the usual tests, he was set aside as not being up to the mark. Simon Cameron was the next customer, and he was declared sound as Florida oak. Simon will be the leading spirit in the new Cabinet, ruling in the kitchen as well as the parlor. Cameron gets the War Department, and will be found equal to the post. He is a descendant of the old Scottish clan—the Highland Camerons—who used to divide their time between speculation and devotion; equally fond of piety and plunder, they succeeded in serving God and Mammon as well as any of our modern jobbing and religious defaulters. In times of political troubles the Camerons were always to be found on the stronger side; and to the gentlemanly occupations previously alluded to they occasionally added a little homicide, by way of relaxation. Nobody ever questioned the pluck of a Cameron, and as this is a virtue generally transmitted in the blood, it is more than probable that Simon has a large share of it. He is a self made man. Beginning as a printer's boy, he worked himself up the editorial chair, waxed wealthy, was cashier of a bank, and then turned professional politician. He is one of the shrewdest men in the business that the country can show. In 1856 he organized the peoples' party in Pennsylvania, and in the very next Legislature managed to upset Forney, who had just succeeded in carrying the State for Buchanan, and fancied that he had Pennsylvania in his breeches pocket. Cameron got the place in the Senate which Forney had set his heart upon, and has been a prime mover in all party tactics since 1857. As a politician he combines the qualities of all the members of the celebrated New York firm—Seward, Weed, Greely & Co. —but resembles Weed more than any of the others.

Seward, as we understand, goes into the Cabinet in order that he may provide for his friends Weed, Draper & Co. Lincoln believed Seward to be a rather a crooked stick and desired that he should go abroad. The Greeley faction also insisted that Seward should be sent off; and it was finally arranged that the post should be tendered to him, and that he should keep it until after the distribution of the spoil, and then go upon a long tour to the East, visiting Japan, China, Hindostan, Persia and Tartary, bringing up at the Holy Sepulcher. Mr. Seward and Mr. Bates have accepted the posts offered to them. Mr. Chase, who is named for the Treasury, is considered as a piece of sound timber of democratic stock, and was urged by the Ohio delegation at Chicago. Chase is a smoother stick than his confrère Wade, who has a tendency to go against the grain. Chase's appointment will be very satisfactory to the West. Robert E. Scott, of Virginia, is the identical Captain Scott whose achievements in coon hunting are well known. In 1852 Captain Scott brought down all the Presidential aspirations by opening

a correspondence with them and spreading their views before the country. Now all the Presidents are bound to come down when summoned by Scott. They inquire: Are you Captain Scott - the Captain Scott whom poor Pierce sent to Rio? If so, don't fire; I come down. It may be, however, that Scott has not leveled his rifle at Lincoln, but that the immortal Botts is to be taken to sleep with Old Abe as with Captain John Tyler. Perhaps the appointment of Botts would have the effect of curing him of the cacoethes scribendi - a frightful malady which has affected him during the last five and twenty years, more or less.

Mr. Graham is a seasoned stick of cabinet timber. He was Secretary of the Interior under Fillmore. In the present aspect of affairs it does not seem probable that he would take office under Lincoln.

Last, and most wonderful of all, we have Gideon Wells, of Connecticut, for the Post Office. Where, in the name of all the departed heroes and fossilized politicians, did they dig up that antique bit of timber? We recollect that one Gideon Welles came to his death by a political accident or blunder in Jackson's time; that he had a great funeral; and it is certain that some wooden nutmeg Old Mortality can point out to the pensive student of epitaphs his tombstone, quite overgrown with moss, and almost hidden by a luxuriant crop of weeds. In the absence of positive proof to the contrary, we are bound to insist that Gideon Welles has been gathered to his fathers, and is, to all intents and purposes, quite incapable of taking charge of any part of the Post Office, unless it may be the Dead Letter department.

We have now finished a preliminary inspection of Mr. Lincoln's timber, and without expressing a definite opinion upon the results of his first attempt at Cabinet making, we may yet say that it is pretty fair for a beginning. Whether the different elements, the Southern oak and Northern maple, can be worked in together, time will show. It seems that only Seward, Bates and Cameron are sure that Seward will give up his portfolio soon after the 4th of March, and that Cameron will rule at the White House. Of course there will be a tremendous rush for the federal spoils, and perhaps it will be as well for our republican friends to take some measures to assure their followers that there will be something left to struggle for. A great deal depends upon the result of the rail splitter Cabinet making. What does the country think of it?

DIARY OF A YANKEE IN THE PATENT OFFICE

SUNDAY 6

It has been said that "there are no Sundays in revolutionary times" and this has been a dark and anxious day. The Members of Congress have been together in small companies trying to agree upon some plan that will satisfy all sides. The news from the South is bad as it can well be. It looks as tho the North must prepare for a fight. If nothing but a fight will satisfy the South they can have one probably if it comes to Govt or no Govt.

January 7, 1861

THE NEW YORK HERALD

OUR WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENCE.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5, 1861.

Those who are well acquainted with major Anderson are much amused at the descriptions which are given of him by Northern papers. He seems to be thought a phlegmatic statesman rather than a soldier, and to have acted, in removing the troops under his command from Fort Moultrie to Fort Sumter, from motives of pure national policy. The very reverse is the case. He is a highly honorable army officer, and has done no more than, without contrary instructions would have been instinctive and natural to any well informed, judicious military tactician. That is, knowing that Fort Sumter was the key to the entire federal strength in Charleston harbor, that the militia of Charleston, once in possession of it, could not be dislodged, and would possess the command of Fort Moultrie, and having been informed that its seizure by a mob was imminent, he retired to a vantage ground, which it would have been next to reasonable to have permitted insurrectionists to hold and menace him from. Any diplomatic afterthought no more entered his head probably, than it does that of, any responsible commander of a post in fulfilling present duty, leaving the consequence in the hands of Providence.

IMPORTANT FROM WASHINGTON.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 6., 1861

The President, in submitting the correspondence with the South Carolina Commissioners to Congress tomorrow, will accompany it with a special message, setting forth the condition of affairs in South Carolina and other Southern States that have and are still engaged in taking possession of property belonging to the United States and setting at defiance the federal laws. In submitting these facts to Congress he will leave to them to take such action in the matter as they may think proper, whether it be the enactment of a force bill or nay other measure which will meet the exigencies of the times.

It is generally believed that he will recommend something in the shape of a force bill. He will inform Congress as he did the Commissioners, that he intends to collect the revenue, execute the laws and defend the government property with all the power at his command.

The President's Message will be accompanied by documents showing the position of Major Anderson, which, it is said, will reflect the greater credit upon that gallant officer than he has yet received. Nothing will do so much at this time toward allaying the tendency to treason, now so rampant, and uniting the people, without reference to party, of the Northern and border slave States in their adherence to the Union as the reported firm position that Mr. Buchanan will take in his Message tomorrow.

The Southern Senators and members have got an inkling of the contents of the Message, and are preparing for an onslaught upon the President. They intend to attack him after the manner of the South Carolina Commissioners in their communication, charging him with deception and falsehood, and will attempt to prove that he had given pledges to the people of South Carolina that the status which existed up to the time that

Major Anderson changed his garrison should be rigidly maintained. They intend to read the reply of the Commissioners, which President Buchanan refused to receive and let it go on the journal as part of the correspondence.

The action of the Secretary of the navy in garrisoning Fort Washington with a company of marines is severely commented upon by the other men. They regard it as an indication on the part of the administration of the policy intended to be pursued towards the South generally.

The statement that Ben McCullough is engaged in recruiting volunteers in Maryland and Virginia for the purpose of making an attack upon this city, or to prevent the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln, is without shadow of foundation. He left here for Texas several weeks ago to attend to some private business. He is not expected here for several weeks to come.

Major Anderson is believed to have acted the part of a sagacious soldier. He was informed before he left for Charleston, that Fort Pinckney had a furnace for heating shot, which would enable him with a single company to defy all South Carolina, and reduce Charleston to ashes in case of attack. It was requisite, however, that he should hold Fort Moultrie with three companies more and two at Fort Sumter. With the small number of men under his command he did the wisest thing—what, as a soldier's common sense exacted—in retiring to Fort Sumter, where he is comparatively safe, and with his own safety the chances of bloodshed are greatly diminished.

THE NEWS

The present week, in all probability, will be an eventful one in the history of the Union. The Virginia Legislature will begin its session today, and the North Carolina Legislature will assemble after having enjoyed a short recess. The Tennessee Legislature will hold a special session commencing today, and, with the other Legislatures, with special reference to the present crisis. The State conventions of Florida, Mississippi and Alabama will be in session today; and, from what we can learn, in all probability will pass secession ordinances before the present week shall have passed.

Our despatch from Washington, given this morning, state that the President will today communicate to congress the correspondence with the South Carolina Commissioners, accompanied with a message setting forth the condition of affairs in such of the Southern States as have been engaged in taking forcible possession of the property of the general government. It was generally believed that he would recommend the enactment of a Force bill, and reiterate his determination to execute the laws and defend the government property with all the means at his command.

Governor Hicks, of Maryland, has published an address to his constituents, stating his reasons for declining to call the Legislature together, and giving his opinion of the entire secession movement in very plain terms. Several eloquent extracts from the address are given in our despatch from Baltimore this morning.

From Richmond, we learn that Senator Mason had arrived there, and will tomorrow address the people in favor of immediate secession. It was generally believed that Governor Letcher in his forthcoming message to the Legislature would favor the formation of a Central confederacy, but the project appeared to find but few friends.

The gentleman recently appointed Collector of the port of Charleston by Presi-

dent Buchanan, who has hereto fore been denominated as a Mr. McIntyre, we learn from the Charleston despatches, is a Mr. McKibben of Pennsylvania, the father of the Hon. James McKibben, late member of Congress from California.

A detachment of United States marines left the Marine barracks, Brooklyn, New York, on Saturday afternoon last, for Washington. They consist of the old guard of the United States ship Cyane, lately relieved from the Pacific station. The marine guard of the United States ship St. Marys, also on the Pacific station, has been relieved, and will arrive here by the next steamer from Aspinwall. On their arrival they will be immediately transferred to Washington, it being the object, it is reported, to concentrate all the available marine force at that place that can be spared from the different land stations and guards of vessels coming from sea, to better enable the Navy Department to meet any demand in the early completion of guard for vessels of war that may be called into commission, and likewise to more securely guard from molestation public property in the Navy yard at Washington. The steamer Nashville, from Charleston, which arrived at this city on Saturday morning, brought sixty of the laborers discharged from the forts by Major Anderson. The men appeared to have been provided for in such a manner as they should not find themselves destitute on landing in New York. In addition to a steerage passage, they had sufficient funds to enable them to reach their several homes in the North, whence they had previously gone to Charleston in search of work. The only reason assigned for their discharge was a suspension of the works progressing in Charleston harbor.

A despatch from Baltimore today confirms the report of the murder of Mr. Lucius Woodruff, in Northampton county, Va., on Monday last, by four of his slaves. The principal in the murder had escaped, but the other three were in custody. Great excitement prevailed in the neighborhood, and a determination was expressed to hang the negroes at once.

CHARLESTON MERCURY

THE MERCURY BULLETINS, we are proud to learn, are always looked for at all the forts and fortifications as containing the very latest and most reliable news in this great crisis. Yesterday afternoon, when copies of our special despatches from Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Alabama and Washington, reached Fort Moultrie, the glad tidings they contained were greeted by the garrison with huzzas that made the welkin ring. We fancy that the benighted folks in Fort Sumter were rather puzzled to know what their Palmetto neighbors were cheering at.

THE RICHARDSON GUARD, preceded by a fine band of music, passed through our principal streets last night, and in the evolutions of their drill evinced remarkable proficiency. They proceeded to the residence of their First Lieutenant, CHAS. H. AXSON, Esq; where, in response to repeated cheers and calls, he came out and acknowledged the compliment in appropriate terms. He then introduced F.D. RICHARDSON, Esq; in whose honor the company was named, who delivered a stirring address. Speeches were also made by Hon. L.M. KEITT and Ex-Governor MANNING, who has taken a great interest in this fine corps, and who has aided them in the purchase of uniforms by a munificent donation. The company then, by invitation, en-

tered and partook of a handsome collation, during which the best feeling prevailed. Shortly before midnight the company was dismissed, with three cheers for Hon. R. BARNWELL RHETT, and separated with six more cheers for Lieut. AXSON

DIARY OF A YANKEE IN THE PATENT OFFICE

MONDAY, JANUARY 7, 1861.

The weather is soft and rather foggy and some rain. I went to the Bank of the Metropolis today and bot a Draft on N.Y. for \$40 and sent to Prest of Elmira College on Julias account. Called upon Doct Fife Dentist with the Note from D Chapman & Co got no money, but a good promise. Was in at Willards, people much excited and everybody talking about public matters. Talk today that Senator Toombs of Georgia will be arrested for high Treason. He Telegraphed to Savannah it is said, to "Seize the Forts." The fire bells ring every night. – We hardly know what to look for next.

THE SMALL PRINT

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