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AN ADDRESS,

Delivered at the Masonic Hall, in Salem, on the Anniversary of St. John's,

BY N. T. CATON, ESQ.

REQUEST.

N. T. CATON—Sir: The undersigned having heard your address, delivered in Masonic Hall on Tuesday evening last, Dec. 27th, 1864, are desirous of having the same published, if convenient for you, believing it will have a tendency to remove some of the great objections against the Fraternity.

ANDREW MCCALLEY,
GEO. A. EDES,
T. H. COX,
C. M. CARTWRIGHT.

RESPONSE.

MESSRS. MCCALLEY, and others—Gents: In response to your note of request, I cheerfully furnish for publication a copy of my address referred to therein. A realization of a title of your anticipations will more than compensate for any labor bestowed in its preparation. Yours, &c., N. T. CATON.

Jan. 2, 1865.

Worshipful Master, Wardens, and Brethren, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I have been selected to deliver an address upon this occasion. With much diffidence and great distrust of my ability to entertain you, I enter upon the performance of that, to me, pleasant duty, feeling assured that whatever deficiency you discover in the effort, your good sense and sound judgment will attribute not to any lack of inclination, but to that want of ability known and felt very sensibly by myself. With an earnest desire to do whatever I can, or whatever I undertake, the very best that abilities, limited as mine are, capable of doing and having thus exerted myself, I offer no further apologies, but introduce you to what I have prepared, upon which, of course, you will pass your own judgment.

For six thousand years and more the world has existed, and notwithstanding convulsions, both of nature and of the busy denizens of earth who jostle against each other in the world—spreading terror and devastation in the one case, and drenching the land with blood in the other—still the sun does not forego to bless the earth with light, and all nature seems advancing toward the accomplishment of that destiny designed by the Great Ruler himself.

During all this long period, man the agent through whom the various revolutions that have racked the world and shook the governments of earth, has nervously gazed upon the agitation and commotion of his own creation. Passivity has formed but little of the ingredient of his nature. Exercise of brain and nerve seems to have predominated in his composition. Whenever an appeal is made to the annals of the world with irresistible power, the mind of the inquirer is forced to no doubtful conclusion upon the subject of man's propensity for action.

Go into the various departments of life, every calling and profession known to the civilized world, reason with temerity, if you choose, criticise with austerity, and judge with less charity than is usual to inquirers after truth still standing out in bold relief in colossal magnitude appears the feats by man accomplished, complete and perfect in all their parts. The performances of man, when impartially viewed and justly and honestly judged, will produce pleasing reflections and deserved applause and admiration. Beauty, strength, symmetry, qualities which stand pre-eminent in the great catalogue, known, appreciated, and reverenced by an intelligent world, are to be discovered in the front spreading in prodigal profusion a grace and satisfaction around.

In the results of physical effort we do not behold all there is of the creation of man, genius upon which we bestow our admiration, but in the great empire of mind we find his greatest trophies, his mightiest conquest. In the one picture, bold and ragged stands the huge cliffs and towering mountains in a prairied land; while in the other, we gaze in rapture upon a green spot of earth mid sands and deserts, with clear rippling brooks, invitingly beckoning the weary to repose awhile and refresh himself. In the one case, we have the coarser garments for comfort, the shields for the body from the cold and merciless storm;—in the other, are seen the finer habiliments of dress, the necessary concomitants of luxury.—Agriculture, architecture and general mechanics, in fact, all the useful arts can readily be assigned their proper sphere and station occupied in the history of the achievements of man.

These constitute the most independent, healthful, and, by far, the most indispensable services to mankind. Mechanics have been rendered glorious by its most eminent votaries. Volumes innumerable have been written and printed to store the mind with the grand entertaining and useful lessons therein inculcated that man may become wiser, better and happier. Architecture lives in story. It has been rendered immortal in the muse's lyre, the poet's song. From pyramidal stately ruins and Balbec's heap of rubbish down to Alhambra's moonlight scene, architecture lives in grandeur in ruin's mighty history. In Turkish mosque and minaret, in St. Peter's venerated temple and Gibraltar's defiant tower, at whose base ocean's giant billows dash in phrensy wild, while the mad winds howl the requiem, behold the victory of man's energy in this department. The world is filled with living monuments of the skill of eminent craftsmen of the age. The past is preserved in history, both profane and divine, and in the grateful remembrance of each succeeding generation of men. When we view the extraordinary manifestation of of wisdom and architectural skill displayed in the erection of Solomon's celebrated temple, we are no more surprised at its classification by the wise men of the past as one of the seven wonders of the world than we are at the fact that from and after its completion it has formed an important feature in its history and connections in that ancient order the imposing ceremony of the installation of whose officers we have just witnessed. But it is in the results of man's mental efforts that his pre-eminence is chiefly discovered, his power displayed. Masonry is one of the products of his intellect, and yet it appears the offspring of Divinity. The purity of its moral teachings and the truth and correctness of its principle, point with unerring certainty to the source from which the sublime truths upon which Masonry is founded emanated. It is true the Great Architect of the Universe himself in his great condescension to the inhabitants of earth recorded the sublime truths from the circumstances of which therein detailed Masonry derives its origin. Yet it is not a religious institution. The principal object of Masonry being to promote and cherish the personal and social virtues among its own members it cannot be an ephemera, a mere bubble, a thing of a day, but as lasting and immutable as the sacred truths from which it derived and now sustains its own vitality.

Masonry, it has been usual to consider under two denominations, Operative and Speculative.

Under the former allusion is made to the useful rules of architecture whence a structure desires figure, strength and beauty and whence will result a due proportion and a just correspondence in all its parts. It requires not even a slight reminder in this inclement season of the year to impress us with the realization of the convenience of dwellings to shelter us from the pitiless storm. These are displays of Operative Masonry. They show the effects of human wisdom in the selection and peculiar arrangement of varied material out of which an edifice is constructed and demonstrates the power and profundity of that science and industry with which man is blest for wise purposes. Of column and pilaster, of frieze and dome, of turret and foundation stone, does Operative Masonry speak. Of these, in sweetest strains and measured lines have carolled Time's famous bards. The poet's descriptive fire has burned and blazed with sublime brilliance that future tenants of earth may know the beauty and excellence of Operative Masonry. Not all the power which monarchs possess and majesty of their station could more forcibly inculcate any given truth than does Operative Masonry to the members of our fraternity. Speculative Masonry seizes with a master hand these performances of Operative Masonry and enforces those sublimest morals and God-like teachings the wonder and admiration of the learned, the conspicuous and the great in all ages of the world who have mingled in her solemn convocations.

What is written is written for the benefit of the world; and from what is written we learn that by speculative Masonry we learn to subdue the passions of the human heart, and where passion is kept within due bound it cannot be such a difficult task to act with those with whom we come in contact as sound judgment and good conscience would dictate. We perceive at once this to be, to some extent, interwoven with that religion which a benignant God has seen proper to discover to the world and secures to him that rational homage which at once constitutes man's happy prerogative and exalted privilege. It is through speculative Masonry we are led to contemplate the glorious work of creation, its wonderful machinery, the systematic adaptation, the various parts to each other, and inspires us with those becoming, high, exalted ideas of the perfections of the Grand Master above—well calculated to direct even fancy's vision toward the most beneficial objects. If to teach how to subdue the passions of the human heart be the mission of speculative Masonry what more important can be conceived. Storms on the mighty waters' trackless waste arise, mad waves that swell to mountains high, threatening to engulph every floating object, winds that rush with fearful fury over the bosom of the ocean, bearing destruction in its van to water craft, however strong of build; and dismay and agonizing suspense to the sturdy mariner is a fearful picture for contemplation. Yet when we turn our eyes and look upon Deity's most noble work the parallel is perfect. Storms of passion arise sweeping away all the safeguards with which reason and discretion environ the individual.—Hate and Revenge play merry pranks with the human heart, and selfishness too often rules supreme over our conduct with our fellow men. The great problem of human life is enveloped in a thousand paradoxes, or embodied in extraordinary characters. No stretch of the imagination is it to say that we have among us desperate lovers, sublime ruffians, sentimental savages or bloody bigots. It is when the spirit is stirred, the emotions in agitation, the cauldron of mad passions in a boil, that the gentle teachings of speculative Masonry with a bewitching softness soothe the troubled spirit and whispers of the refreshing sense of truth, purity and elegance.

What would the glittering curses of life amount to—the heartless dissipations, the selfish extravagances, the rejection of all interesting occupations or serious affections which blast the splendid summit of human fortune with perpetual barrenness and discomfort—did no warnings arrest the step and claim the attention of that portion of the human species who court the miseries of earth.

We do not think that vices are occasioned by ignorance or improper education, but by the eagerness for some engrossing occupation which we announced in the beginning of this lecture as the irreversible destiny of man. It is therefore good for man to earn his livelihood by the exercise of the powers bestowed upon him.—Even then, all the restraints that can be thrown around him are most salutary. Masonry operates in this direction, hence we deduce a powerful argument in favor of our honored and ancient fraternity.

At this point permit me to suggest that the strongest lance that is hurled against Masonry is that of its secrecy. This is the foundation upon which every other objection urged by the loud mouthed, and very often uncharitable, not to say dishonest, opponents of our order is based.

If this objection be worthy of consideration at all, it can only be entitled to notice from the fact that it has the semblance of weight, and therefore well calculated to deceive.

It needs only a single glance to show how weak the effort is. You discover that the principles and objects of Masonry can suffer naught from even the truth of this objection. Its principles and teachings are therefore good, proper and right,—or like Portia's wife, above the suspicion of these cavillers, whose very brain is ransked to discover some ground upon which to justify vilification and abuse. The opposition is then narrowed down to the question of secrecy. And that may be urged with equal propriety against the highest branch of our National Legislature, and against the House of Bishops, of a highly respectable and influential religious organization. Because of their secrecy are they therefore unnecessary? Are they wrong? Ought they to be abandoned? Do they accomplish no good? Who is there in this age of cultivation, refinement and learning that will so affirm. Again, this objection militates against social order in our very midst. Society is based upon law. Law cannot be enforced without the strictest secrecy, and that secrecy is imposed by the most sacred and binding obligation. The reason given by the courts entrusted with the enforcement of law, is that the public good demands secrecy. Criminals might escape before arrest, after their presentment by a Grand Jury, if community generally were the custodians of the fact. The principle involved is the same. Shall we, I ask in all candor, uproot and overturn what the experience of ages justifies, in order to silence a senseless cavil, when the same experience demonstrates how indispensible to such associations, from their very nature, is this requisite of secrecy.

Two things should be amply sufficient to satisfy the honest and intelligent of the good of Masonry—its unparalleled preservation in all its original purity, and the character of its followers. Time has dealt gently with our institution. Nations have arisen, reached their zenith of grandeur and glory, culminated and decayed, leaving naught behind of all their power and greatness but the imperfect sketch by the pen of the historian drawn. That Greece, that once flourished as a nation free, with laws sublime, and could boast of the justice of an Aristides, the eloquence of a Demosthenes, and once rang with the melody of a Homer's harp, now shrinks with the tread of the timid slave. The lapse of time, the devastations of war and other causes have destroyed many valuable monuments of antiquity, among others that celebrated temple of which we before spake. Seven long years were consumed in its erection, and we are told by a sacred historian that during all that period it rained not in the day time. That temple, that witnessed the rise and fall of Empires, remained unchanged amid the convulsions of centuries, finally shared the fate of other works of genius and sank beneath the unsparing ravages of a barbarous horde.—*Masonry still survives.* With trumpet tongue its antiquity speaks its praise. Without a close relationship to truth immutable, to justice and to right, it too, would have been swallowed up in the great vortex of revolutions, and have long since passed from the memory of man.

The good and the great of all ages, men of talents, of learning, of known worth and acknowledged virtues, have mingled in our solemn assemblies. This is certainly enough in, and of, itself considered to disarm the venom of our bitterest enemies, blunt the very point of their opposition and silence forever their choicest sarcasms.

Men, loved and reverenced by the world, patrons of christianity and purest patriots, of which history can boast, have been advocates and members of the craft.

With your permission, I will introduce a short extract from the letter of acceptance of the candidate of the anti-Masonic convention of 1831 for the Presidency of the United States. I do not recollect having seen it referred to in addresses of this nature. Yet I think it, from its dignified and manly tone and modesty of expression, entitled to greater publicity than it has obtained. William Wirt, the author of the extract, had stood foremost at the bar of the Supreme Court of the United States, where blazed the meteor Pinkney, the prince of American orators. Mr. Wirt had occupied the post of Attorney General of our nation for a longer period than any other man before or since his day. In accepting the nomination of the anti Masonic convention he said:

"On the contrary, having before my initiation been assured by a gentleman in whom I had implicit confidence that there was nothing in the engagement which could affect either my religion or politics (which I considered as comprehending the whole range of my duties, civil and religious, and as extending not to the first degree only, but to the whole Masonic order), and being further informed that many of the most illustrious men of Virginia, with Gen. Washington at their head, had taken the degree of Master, I did not believe that there could be anything in the institution at war with their duties as patriots, men and Christians; nor is yet possible for me to believe that they could have understood the engagement as involving any such criminal obligations. I have thence forward continually regarded Masonry as nothing more than a social and charitable club, designed for the promotion of good feeling among its members and for the pecuniary relief of their indigent brethren."

Again he says: "I have been grieved at seeing some of my friends involved in what appeared to me such a wild, and bitter, and unjust persecution against so harmless an institution as Free Masonry. I have thought, and repeatedly said, that I considered Masonry as having no more to do with politics than any of the numerous clubs so humorously celebrated in the *Spectator*, and that with regard to the crime in Morgan's case, it was quite as unjust to charge that on Masonry as it would be to charge the private delinquencies of some professing Christians on Christianity itself."

These sentiments speak for themselves. The objections removed by the clear sighted Wirt, together with those heretofore considered, are all that have been urged against our order with anything bordering upon consistency, and these have been urged with zeal and acrimony. Yet Masonry exists to day, and increase of strength, respectability and acknowledged usefulness in the world have silently usurped the place of opposition thereto.

Brethren, the tenets of our ancient fraternity require only, at our hands, such a strict recognition as will exhibit their truth, their potency and their purity in our conduct with ourselves and our fellow men, in order to insure their acceptance by the good and honest of the land.

To-day we enter upon a new Masonic year, with new resolves and new hopes; let us enter upon its solemn duties, feeling assured if we do our duty we will be advanced ourselves in the scale of being, our order honored and built up and mankind forever blest.

LETTER FROM SHERMAN'S ARMY.

The following letter was written by a son of J. C. Carey, Esq., of this county, and will be found full of interest:

ROME, Ga., Nov. 1, 1864.

DEAR FATHER: Your very kind letter, dated August 29th, has been received. It came to hand about the 20th of October. I was very much pleased to hear from you and to know how you were getting along, as this is the first letter that I have had from you. Yours found me well and in the enjoyment of good health. I have been enjoying very good health since I have been in the army, although I am rather young and not quite as large as some of the rest of the men in the Company, yet I am as able to carry my gun and knap-sack and 40 rounds of cartriges as any of them, and I am ready and willing to carry all these to shoot down rebels, and hope that I may always be able to do so, for traitors to my country *I always despise.* You wanted to know how many battles I have been in—well, I will tell you some of them: I was at Fort Henry and Donelson, and the battle of Shiloh, and the siege of Corinth, and the battle of Corinth and Town Creek, and a great many skirmishes of lesser note, too tedious to mention. I have helped to build any amount of breastworks, stood on picket in all kinds of weather, both night and day, have waded rivers and creeks up to my neck, have traveled over all kinds of country through mud and rain, have slept out-doors in all kinds of weather, have had all kinds of fare, have feasted and fasted, have seen all kinds of people, from high toned Yankees down to dirty, nasty, low-flung rebels, have seen the Southerner living in almost all conditions, and have been in Sherman's campaigns all Summer, and was at the battle of Altoona where the rebels fought us with four men to our one—and then we whipped them badly, and we are still ready to fight them again. We are very confident that we have got the rebels in a bad fix, and are in a fair way to wipe out this rebellion.—while Grant is whipping Lee Sherman is thrashing Hood. Whatever may be your opinion about the war in your country, you need have no fears but what the Old Union will come out all right in the end. Everything in our army has got to such perfection now that every thing works like clock-work. Our soldiers can work as well with the spade as with the musket. Our boys know how to go on long marches and endure hardships as well as any soldiers that ever carried a gun.

I am at present with my Lieutenant, who is Division Ordnance Officer, and am acting as Orderly for him. I have a horse to ride and good grub to eat—and just getting along first rate. I would like first rate to see you and see how you are getting along. But when I will ever get to see you I cannot tell; I do not know whether I will ever get to Oregon or not. I would like very well to come and see you, and see the country, as I think that I would like to take a trip to that country. The last time that I heard from the girls they were both well and getting along very well. I was at home, in Illinois, last Winter, when the regiment went home, and had a good time while there. My time will not be out for two years, as I have veteranned, which will make five years for me in the service. I like it very well—which is the case with all our boys.

We have been having good times this Summer, and have been living on the fat of the land. We have been having very nice weather this Summer for campaigning, until now it has commenced raining, and the nights are becoming cool. There is only one thing about this country that I like, and that is the climate.—I must bring this short epistle to a close; hoping that this may find you well and in the enjoyment of good health. I remain, very truly,

Your Son, JOHN. A. CAREY.

GEN. GRANT AND THE ELECTION.—The following dispatch was sent to Washington after the election:

CITY POINT, Nov. 10, 1864.

Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War:—Enough now seems to be known to say who is to hold the reins of government for the next four years. Congratulate the President for me for the double victory. The election having passed off quietly, no bloodshed or riot throughout the land, is a victory worth more to the country than a battle won. Rebellion and Europe will construe it so.

U. S. GRANT, Lieut. Gen.

☞ Winter, in the most ample form ever vouchsafed to Southern Oregon, is now upon us. During the last week, we have had two freshets, raising some of the smaller streams higher than ever before known. A flood of water and tailings swept down Jackson Creek, taking away one house, containing a lot of carpenter tools. On Thursday night, considerable snow fell, since which time, the weather has been quite cold.—*Sentinel.*

TELEGRAPHIC DISPATCHES.

Surrender of Savannah to Gen. Sherman.

The Rebel Garrison Escapes.

32,000 Bales of Cotton Captured.

Successful Operations of Burbridge in Va.

Operations Commenced near Wilmington.

FORTRESS MONROE, Dec. 26.—The steamer California, fifty-eight hours from Fort Palaski, with confirmatory intelligence of the capture of Savannah, arrived last night. On the 20th, Sherman, having nearly completed the investment of the city, captured Fort Lee and several minor works in the immediate vicinity of the principal intrenchments surrounding the city, and succeeded in planting his artillery in such close proximity to the rebel lines as to command every position held by the forces under Hardee. He sent a summons by a flag of truce to the effect that if the place was not surrendered the bombardment would at once commence. To this summons the wily rebel General replied, that his communications were yet open and his men fully supplied with subsistence and stores of every kind, he was enabled to hold out for a long siege, was determined to hold the city to the very last moment and defend the citizens' property, which had been placed under his protection, until his forces were compelled to surrender. Every preparation had been made by Sherman to assault the rebel position next day; but when the morning of the 21st dawned it was found that the enemy had evacuated their works. Several regiments of infantry immediately took a position and Sherman entered the city at the head of his body guard and received from the hands of a deputation of citizens the surrender of the place. It appears that Hardee, on the night of the 20th, seeing the impossibility of holding the city, and fearing the only chance of escape open beyond the Savannah river was likely to be cut off at any moment, determined to avail himself of this this route for retreat.—His troops were immediately set to partially destroy the navy yard and government stores, and at twilight, under the protection of the iron clads, succeeded in crossing over the causeway to the north side, intending to push forward to Charleston. Thirty-two thousand bales of cotton were stored in the city, which the rebels, in their haste, neglected to destroy. Two iron clads were sunk, all the government property which they could not carry off they burned or threw in the river. Four small steamers, one a gunboat, were captured, which, with the cotton and ammunition, go to form a part of the victory.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 29.—The following report of Burbridge's operations is received:

Catlettsburg, Ky., Dec. 28.—I have the honor to report that my mounted force of 3000, in co-operation with Gen. Gillem's brigade, the whole under the command of Stoneman, marched from Bean's Station on the 12th. At Kingsport I sent two regiments to support Gillem, who flanked the enemy, and routed them, capturing 100 rebels, taking wagon train and 200 prisoners—pursued them to Bristol, which was attacked and captured, with two trains of cars, five engines, and immense quantities of stores. Finding Vaughn was at Zollicoffer, 20 miles below, he marched to attack him, but he slipped away in a dense fog, and made for the salt works. Gillem discovered his flight, and headed him off at Abingdon, which place he (Gillem) captured on night of the 14th, with one gun, a large amount of stores, an engine, with rolling stock. Gillem continued the pursuit of Vaughn, coming up with him in a strong position, capturing 50. I sent Brown's brigade to support Gillem, who again came on the enemy and drove him in confusion, capturing some prisoners, several pieces of artillery, and a large wagon train. Brown's brigade, later in the day, charged the home guards, capturing five cannon and eight caissons. Maj. Hounson, 12th Kentucky, who had been detached by order of Gen. Stoneman, with 300 men, struck the Virginia Railroad, capturing cars. He then got in Vaughn's front, and continued along the railroad, destroying bridges and depots far as Wayville, when the expedition started on the return, both men and horses being nearly worn out. We came on Breckinridge, who was following. An engagement of six hours ensued, at the close of which Breckinridge retreated toward Saltville, but Col. Buckley with his brigade drove him in confusion toward North Carolina. He effectually destroyed the lead mines near Wytheville. On night of the 20th, after recruiting his forces, he captured the salt works, with eight pieces of cannon. The expedition was entirely successful, and will be more felt by the rebels than the loss of Richmond. The salt works of course can't be repaired during the war. My forces are now at this place.

BURBRIDGE.

NEW YORK, 29th.—*Tribune's* Washington special says it was 5,000 colored men landed near Fort Fisher. They attacked and carried at the point of the bayonet all of the works in front of Fort Fisher. Rebels after being reinforced, returned, entered the fort, and drove back the black troops with heavy loss. War remained re-embarked, and the men-of-war again opened on the fort. Pirates Chickahominy and Tallahassee are reported inside at Wilmington. Several blockade runners have been armed. It is rumored the rebels have some iron clads on Cape Fear river that will take part in the fight. Banks of the river from the mouth to Wilmington are partly fortified. Rebel force estimated at 14,000. Many military and naval men say capture of the forts guarding the river the only objects of the expedition.

WASHINGTON, 29th.—Admiral Porter's full report of operations against Wilmington is received. The attack opened 24th with all iron clads and larger vessels of the fleet, the smaller vessels being held in reserve.

NEW YORK, 30.—It is the opinion of most competent judges that Fort Fisher is the strongest earthwork in America. Briefly described as a square bastioned earth work inclosing about five acres of ground and mounting 36 guns.

Previous to making the attack, the torpedo barge supposed to contain powder enough to explode magazine in the fort, was carefully prepared under command of Commander Rhind, and exploded under the fort. Explosion occurred at 45 minutes past 1 o'clock, on morning of the 24th. It was not at all what was expected. Vessels in the fleet were shaken but little. It cannot be ascertained that explosion caused any damage to Fort Fisher.

At daylight the fleet moored; at 11:30 the attack opened in fine style by the New Orleans followed by the Monadnock, Carron and Makepeace. Seventeen guns were counted on the north-east face. Only five were fired; they were soon silenced. Minstrel and other barge vessels next took position. Their fire was rapid.

As soon as they opened, the fire was so heavy as to drive the enemy to the bomb-proofs—they replied from only one or two guns of the smaller gunboats, and then took a position and joined in the fight. In an hour and fifteen minutes after the fight began, the enemy's guns were silenced. Two magazines were blown up, and several buildings set on fire. During the heaviest of the attack, 115 shots per minute were fired. The enemy's guns were silenced so quickly that no one in the fleet was injured by their fire. A 600 pounder Parrott gun exploded, killing and wounding 44 officers and men.

On the morning of the 25th, a conference was held. Butler and Weitzel decided upon a plan of attack. It was decided the fleet should cover the attack while the troops were to be landed to make an assault. Seventeen Sunbeams were sent to cover the landing of the troops; the landing was five miles from the fleet—2,000 troops landed and moved to within 600 yards of the fort. An officer ascended the parapet and brought away a flag. A soldier exposed an orderly, killed his horse and brought off his dispatches. The iron clads were withdrawn, the larger vessels keeping a vigorous fire until daylight, expecting to cover the assault in the morning. Gen. Weitzel sent word that an assault was impracticable. The army landed at 2 p. m., and commenced re-embarking at 5, p.m. Loss of our land forces not stated.

In the bombardment of the 25th the firing was slow for several hours; the enemy had several guns in the upper battery which managed to reach several vessels, without doing much damage.

Butler says that upon landing the troops he accompanied them. Weitzel in a thorough reconnoissance of Fort Fisher, and were both of opinion the place could not be carried by assault, as it was left substantially uninjured by the fire from the navy. Porter, in reply to Butler's letter, said he had ordered the large ships to go to Beaufort for ammunition, to be ready to renew the attack in case he determined to continue it.—He stated they had not commenced to fire, consequently they could keep all the rebels out of sight until the troops were within twenty yards of the fort.—He was of opinion an assault could be successfully made, but would not wish to place his judgement in opposition to Weitzel who had made a survey of the works.

BELPASSI SCHOOL.

ED. STATESMAN: The Belpassi school gave an exhibition on Tuesday evening, December, 29th ultimo, consisting of declamations, dialogues, charades and tableaux, enlivened by sweet music, both vocal and instrumental. While all the scholars did well, I must be permitted to mention the names of some whose performance brought down the house with resounding cheers.

In the dialogue between Uncle Sam, Dr. Eagle, Bro. Jonathan, John Bull, Dennis and others—Dennis (representing the Irish) carried off the palm. In the charades, Miss Shirley, the Misses Brown and Miss Henderson all acted their parts nobly. Among the declaimers, Master Charlie Bonny certainly was not excelled by any. The singing of "Uncle Sam's Funeral" (contrary to all other funeral songs) was responded to by roars of laughter and tremendous stamping. The students deserve great credit for their efforts. At the close of the exhibition, the crowd repaired to the church, in the lower story of the building, where was displayed a magnificent "CHRISTMAS TREE," upon which were nearly 200 specimens of "Christmas fruit," such as children love. The tree was lighted with a dozen wax candles, which added greatly to its beauty. All went off delightfully. OBSERVER.

A WHITE WOMAN HELD CAPTIVE BY INDIANS.—A Minnesota paper says: From Capt. Davy, who was one of the officers sent to the relief of Capt. Fisk's party, we learn that the Indians have a white woman in their possession, who is compelled to live as the wife of one of the principal chiefs. From him we learn that while the Indians were besieging Fisk's party, they informed the Captain by messengers that they had a white prisoner in their possession, and that they were willing to sell her. They said that she could write, and the next day they would have her write a letter stating their terms. Accordingly, the next day a letter was brought to the Captain, written by the prisoner, which stated that she had been captured while crossing the Plains in connection with a large train. The train was surrounded while crossing the Plains west of Fort Laramie, and, after a fight, was surrendered to the Indians upon condition that they would spare the lives of all the men, women and children connected with it.

After the surrender all were killed but the woman—her husband among the others. Her name is Mrs. Kelly, and she formerly resided somewhere in Kansas. She said that the Indians would sell her for thirty head of cattle, but told the Captain not to give that number as they would take a great deal less.

A correspondence was continued in this manner for several days, in the course of which she told the Captain that the Indians wanted him to proceed on his journey, but advised him not to do so, as they intended following him up, and would murder his whole party when they got him in the mountains. Finally, the Captain offered to give him three horses and a wagon load of provisions, which offer they said they would accept, and deliver her up next day. At the appointed time the Indians left, taking their prisoner with them.

GEN. GRANT.—A dispatch to the New York *Times*' of November 17th, at Washington, says:

General Grant has not yet written his official report of the campaign from the Rapidan to the James, and has determined not to do so until he captures Peter burg and Richmond.

MISSOURI.—St. Louis papers put the Union majority in Missouri at 20,000. The Congress Districts are not fully settled, but we conclude that all the newly elected members are Unionists, except from the First District.

[OFFICIAL.]

LAWS OF THE UNITED STATES,

PASSED AT THE

First Session of the Thirty-Eighth Congress.

An Act for the Relief of the Citizens of Denver, in the Territory of Colorado.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the provisions of an act of congress entitled "An act for the relief of the citizens of towns upon the lands of the United States, under certain circumstances," approved May twenty-third, eighteen hundred and forty four, be so extended as to authorize the probate judge of Arapahoe county, in the territory of Colorado, to enter, at the minimum price, in trust for the several use and benefit of the rightful occupants of said land and the bona fide owners of the improvements thereon, according to their respective interests, the following legal subdivisions of land or such portions thereof as are settled and actually occupied for town purposes by the town of Denver aforesaid, to wit: Section number thirty-three, and the west half of section number thirty-four, in township number three south of range number sixty-eight west of the sixth principal meridian: Provided, however, That there shall be reserved from such sale and entry such blocks or lots in the town of Denver as may be necessary for government purposes, to be designated by the commissioner of the general land office.

SEC. 2. And be it further enacted, That in all respects, except as herein modified, the execution of the foregoing provisions shall be controlled by the provisions of said act of twenty third May, eighteen hundred and forty-four, and the rules and regulations of the commissioner of the general land office.

Approved, May 28, 1864.

An Act to provide for the Payment of the Claims of Peruvian Citizens, under the Convention between the United States and Peru, of the twelfth of January, eighteen hundred and sixty-three.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That for the purpose of discharging the obligations of the United States, under the convention with Peru, of the twelfth of January last, there be paid to Stephen G. Mesmane, or to his legal representatives, in the current money of the United States, the sum of forty one thousand seven hundred and eighty two dollars and thirty eight cents; and to Juan del Carmen Vargas, or his legal representatives, the sum of one thousand one hundred and seventy dollars, in the silver money of the United States, or its equivalent, out of any money in the treasury not otherwise appropriated.

Approved, June 1, 1864.

An Act in Relation to Franked Matter.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That all communications relating to the official business of the department to which they are addressed, of whatever origin, addressed to the chiefs of the several executive departments of the government, or to such principal officers of each executive department, being heads of bureaus or chief clerks, or one duly authorized by the Postmaster General to frank official matter shall be received and conveyed by mail free of postage without being endorsed "official business," or with the name of the writer.

Approved, June 1, 1864.

An Act to amend an Act relative to the Public Printing.

Be it enacted by the Senate and house of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That that part of the act entitled "An act to supply deficiency in the appropriations for the service of the fiscal year ending the thirtieth of June, eighteen hundred and sixty-four, and for other purposes," approved March fourteenth, eighteen hundred and sixty-four, so provides "that hereafter no printing or binding shall be done or blank books be procured for any of the executive departments of the government without a written requisition on the superintendent of public printing from the head of such department," be, and the same is hereby, amended by inserting after the word "departments," where it is last above written, the following words, viz: "or his assistants, so that it will read—"the head of such department or his assistant or assistants."

Approved, June 3, 1864.

An Act to repeal the first Section of the Joint Resolution relative to the Transfer of Persons in the Military Service to the Naval Service, approved February twenty four, eighteen hundred and sixty four.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the first section of the joint resolution entitled a "Joint resolution relative to the transfer of persons in the military service to the naval service," approved February twenty-four, eighteen hundred and sixty four, be, and the same is hereby, repealed.

Approved, June 3, 1864.

An Act to re-establish the principal Port of Entry for the District of Champlain at Plattsburgh, and for other Purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the third section of an act entitled "An act to equalize and establish the compensation of the collectors of the customs on the northern, northeastern, and northwestern frontiers, and for other purposes," approved March third, eighteen hundred and sixty three, changing the port of entry for the district of Champlain from Plattsburg to Rouse's Point, be, and the same is hereby, repealed, and that Plattsburgh be, and the same is hereby, re-established as the principal port of entry for said district, at which the collector of customs shall reside. And a deputy collector shall reside at Rouse's Point, and be vested with all the power and authority given to deputy collectors by law.

Approved, June 3, 1864.

An Act to amend an Act entitled "An Act making a Grant of alternate Sections of [the] Public Lands to the State of Michigan to aid in the Construction of certain Railroads in said State, and for other Purposes."

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the act entitled "An act making a grant of alternate sections of [the] public lands to the State of Michigan to aid in the construction of certain railroads in said state, and for other purposes," be and the same is hereby, amended as follows, namely, Substitute for the words "and from Grand Rapid to some point on or near Traverse Bay," contained in the first section of said act, these words: And from Fort Wayne, in the State of Indiana, to a point on the southern boundary line of the State of Michigan, in the township of Sturgis, thence, by way of Grand Rapids, to some point on or near Traverse Bay. And the said act shall be, and is hereby, so amended as to substitute for the first clause of the 3rd proviso in the first section thereof, so far as the same shall be applicable to the grant of lands made to aid in the construction of the railroad described in the foregoing amendment, these words: Provided, That the lands so to be selected shall in no case be further than twenty miles from the line of said roads: Provided, further, That the time specified in the 4th section of the act hereby amended for the completion of said road shall not be extended.

SEC. 2. And be it further enacted, That the lands granted by the act amended by this act, and also by the provisions of this act, to aid in the construction of the railroad described in the foregoing section, shall be disposed of only in the following manner, that is to say, when the governor of the State of Michigan shall certify to the Secretary of the Interior that ten consecutive miles of said road have been completed in a good and substantial manner as a first-class railroad, indicating definitely where said completed section commences and where the same terminates, the said secretary shall cause patents to issue to said state for so much of said lands as are located opposite to, and coterminous with, said completed section of said road, and so from time to time for each completed section of ten miles of said road until the whole shall be completed.

Approved, June 7, 1864.

An Act to provide for granting an honorable Discharge to Coal heavers and Firemen in the Naval Service.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That honorable discharges may be granted to coal heavers and firemen in the naval service of the United States in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as such discharges are now granted to seamen, ordinary seamen, landsmen, and boys.

Approved, June 7, 1864.

An Act to provide a temporary Government for the Territory of Montana.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That all that part of the territory of the United States included within the limits, to wit: Commencing at a point formed by the intersection of the twenty-seventh degree of longitude west from Washington with the forty-fifth degree of north latitude; thence due west on said forty-fifth degree of latitude to a point formed by its intersection with the thirty-fourth degree of longitude west from Washington; thence due south along said thirty-fourth degree of longitude to its intersection with the forty-fourth degree and thirty minutes of north latitude; thence due west along said forty fourth degree and thirty minutes of north latitude to a point formed by its intersection with the crest of the Rocky Mountains; thence following the crest of the Rocky Mountains northward till its intersection with the Bitter Root Mountains; thence northward along the crest of the said Bitter Root Mountains to its intersection with the thirty-ninth degree of longitude west from Washington; thence along said thirty-ninth degree of longitude northward to the boundary line of the British possessions; thence eastward along said boundary line to the twenty-seventh degree of longitude west from Washington; thence southward along said twenty-seventh degree of longitude to the place of beginning, be, and the same is hereby, created into a temporary government by the name of the Territory of Montana: Provided, That nothing in this act contained shall be construed to inhibit the government of the United States from dividing said territory or changing its boundaries in such manner and at such time as Congress shall deem convenient and proper, or from attaching any portion of said territory to any other state or territory of the United States: Provided, further, That nothing in this act shall be construed to impair the rights of person or property now pertaining to the Indians in said territory so long as such rights shall remain unextinguished by treaty between the United States and such Indians, or to include any territory which, by treaty with any Indian tribes, is not, without the consent of said tribe, to be included within the territorial limits or jurisdiction of any state or territory; but all such territory shall be excepted out of the boundaries, and constitute no part of the Territory of Montana until said tribe shall signify their assent to the President of the United States to be included within said territory, or to affect the authority of the government of the United States to make any regulations respecting such Indians, their lands, property, or other rights, by treaty, law, or otherwise, which it would have been competent for the government to make if this act had never passed.

SEC. 2. And be it further enacted, That the executive power and authority in and over said Territory of Montana shall be vested in a governor, who shall hold his office for four years, and until his successor shall be appointed and qualified, unless sooner removed by the President of the United States. The governor shall reside within said territory, and shall be commander-in chief of the militia and superintendent of the Indian affairs thereof. He may grant pardons and respites for offences against the laws of said territory, and reprieve for offences against the laws of the United State until the decision of the President of the United States can be made known thereon; he shall commission all officers who shall be appointed to office under the laws of the said territory, and shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed.

SEC. 3. And be it further enacted, That there shall be a secretary of said territory, who sh