

11. The political parties, I am aware, have taken some interest in the affair, the Liberals being desirous of favouring the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, and the Conservatives being equally anxious to please the Established Church of Scotland. But there are honourable men on both sides, and they will see that this is not to be treated as a party question. Our statements are true—our demands are reasonable. We shall have an impartial hearing, and a "good deliverance."

Yours, &c.,
ONE OF THE COMMITTEE.

Dec. 9, 1863.

Religious Intelligence.

SHERBROOKE, LUNENBURG Co.—Rev. R. S. Morton writes Dec. 8th:—"We have had two baptisms here recently, one person each time; but one soul is precious. May God carry on his own work, and all our churches speedily experience a blessed revival of religion within their borders."

UPPER SALISBURY, N. B.—Rev. Jas. Trimble writes to the Christian Visitor:—"The Lord is blessing us here of late. The captivity of Zion has been turned in this place; sinners have been converted; backsliders reclaimed. Fifteen believers have been baptized, and we expect many more to follow our divine Redeemer in his ordinances. May the Lord continue to bless."

THE BAPTISTS IN RUSSIA.

There have for some time past been frequent cases of severe persecution of persons for becoming Baptists in Russia and its dependencies and for disseminating their sentiments and preaching the gospel. By our last mail we learn that an Imperial Ukase had been issued in reply to an appeal to the higher courts, to the effect that the Court of Tribunal in Courland were to release the prisoners Gaertner and Jannsohn because, "firstly, no proof exists that an understanding was come to between the parties not to comply with the ordinances of the local authorities; and, secondly, as is evident from the depositions of Gaertner and Jannsohn, their non-compliance with these ordinances did not proceed from the intent of acting in opposition to the police, but solely from their religious convictions."

The following extract of a letter from Mr. Neimtz of Memel will show how this change is viewed by the brethren there and the unexpected joy experienced in the freedom given them to worship God and obey the Savior's commands:—"Memel, Nov. 14, 1863.—The Lord has done great things for us. Since my last, sixty-six souls have been received into the church. What joy for the angels of God in heaven! The Lord has again shown forth His power in our stations in Courland. I told you in my last that Brother Gaertner was again in prison, with another member who had allowed him to hold a meeting in his house. It was very distressing, and there was no seeing where this would end. Then all at once and unexpectedly the leaf turned. The Governor of Courland about five weeks ago, one day came to the town of Hosenpoh, where Brother Gaertner lay in prison, and gave orders that he should immediately be set at liberty. He said moreover to our brother, 'You can go to your own house and pray there, and worship no longer in the woods. It would be a disgrace to the Czar that pious people should have to go and worship in the woods.' Joyfully went Brother Gaertner home, and, a few days later, in clear day and before many witnesses, baptized sixteen persons into the death of Jesus. Is it not wonderful in our eyes? Truly the Lord hath done great things!"

American and Foreign News.

Latest from the States!

[From Telegrams to morning and evening papers.]

TUESDAY, Dec. 8th.—President Lincoln recommends public thanksgiving for the safety of East Tennessee.

A despatch from Cairo says a report from Columbus, Kentucky, states that 5,000 Confederates are advancing on Mayfield, Ky.

An arrival from Fort Royal reports, in passing Charleston, no cannonading, but dense smoke visible over the city.

Gen. Grant captured since the war began 472 cannon, and 90,000 prisoners.

Colfax elected Speaker of the House.

WEDNESDAY, Dec. 9th.—New York Herald says, Lee is putting his army into winter quarters, on the side of the Rapidan.

General Thomas Francis Meagher, visiting the army in citizens dress is reported to have been captured in a recent engagement, and is now in the hands of the Confederates (see Friday's dispatch).

Frauds have been discovered in the Quarter Master's department at Alexandria, involving him in about 1,000,000 of dollars.

The Secretary of the Treasury's estimate for the present fiscal year is eight hundred and two millions.

The steamer Chesapeake, plying between Portland and New York, was seized on Monday morning, off Cape Cod, by sixteen Southerners, who had taken passage at New York. The

second Engineer was killed and the mate wounded, and the crew, numbering sixteen, and six passengers, were landed at St. John, N. B. this morning by a pilot boat. The Chesapeake came too off Partridge Island about midnight, and sailed soon after. She is commanded by a Mr. Braine, and the second in command is Lieut. Parr, one of Morgan's men. The ship and cargo is valued at \$180,000.

THURSDAY, Dec. 10.—Repairing the railroad from Bridgeport, and increasing the steamboat facilities, is being pushed forward with great energy.

Gen. Sherman has relieved Gen. Burnside at Knoxville.

Memphis papers say that the impressment for military service was to begin yesterday.

The President delivered his Message to-day at noon. He says that we remain in peace and friendship with foreign powers, and that all efforts to embroil the country, and to aid inexcusable insurrection, have been unavailing.

The Consul at St. John, N. B., has been instructed to detain the "Chesapeake," should she arrive there.

The President's Message exhibits total receipts 5,000,000. The War Department consumed \$600,000,000; Naval do. \$63,000,000.

Since the commencement of the Southern blockade, over one thousand vessels have been captured by Federal cruisers. The value of prizes already sent in for adjudication amounts to \$13,000,000.

An extensive conflagration occurred yesterday among the barges, buildings, etc., along the North River, New York, destroying twenty vessels and several blocks. Loss, half a million of dollars.

New York Times says, Lee occupies his old position at Orange Court House, his advance line guarding the Rapidan fords. Pickets are again on friendly terms, though bushwhackers begin to swarm on Union flanks.—Deserters represent Lee's army not over 35,000, and erecting winter-huts along the Rapidan. President Davis delivered his annual message to the Confederate Congress on Monday; its tone is reported mournful.

FRIDAY, Dec. 11.—Morrill, of Vermont, has given notice in Congress of a Bill, having in view the termination of the Reciprocity treaty, and Howard, of New York, proposes joint resolution, authorising appointment of Commissioners to negotiate a new treaty based upon true principles of Reciprocity.

A despatch from Mobile reports that the Yankees were defeated at Plaquemine, La., on the 27th ult., with loss of 2000.

The prize steamer Ella and Annie, and sloop-of-war Ticonderoga left Boston yesterday, also gunboats Schazo, Grand Gulf, and Vicksburg, left New York also in pursuit of the Chesapeake. Gen. Meagher has not been taken prisoner.

SATURDAY, Dec. 12.—Newbern despatches state that immense quantities of goods have run the blockade into Wilmington. Over 200 steamers are engaged in this branch of business.

Lowe's Message of California says the recent election there must destroy all hope of foreign or domestic foes of receiving aid or sympathy from the Pacific coast.

Gen. Commonfort has been killed in Mexico, while fighting with a Mexican band favoring the French occupation of that country.

MONDAY, Dec. 14th.—There was a great gale on the coast of South Carolina on Sunday. The Monitor Weehawkin, sunk at her moorings off Morris Island; 30 of her crew perished.

There was great terror in Charleston from the bombardment of the city, causing people to retire beyond the range of Federal guns.

Private advices at Washington represent that the session of the Confederate congress will be a stormy one. The question of reconstruction will be fearlessly presented by Northern Carolina Conservative members. Many members elected on last Ditch platform are reported secretly to be in favor of reconstruction.

President Davis cannot recommend the proper blockade of the United States' ports, but favors the capture of all neutral vessels trading with their ports. He says that the currency excess is six hundred millions—threefold of what the business of the Confederacy requires.

Evening.—Russian Minister gave a magnificent entertainment to Congress on board the Russian frigate. He gave sentiment—"Perpetual prosperity of United States." Speaker Colfax in replying said the friendship for Russia was because she had expressed sympathy for the United States in trouble.

Blockade of Wilmington to be greatly strengthened. Numerous inlets render complete blockade quite impossible.

In Confederate Congress, Foote, of Tennessee, charged President Davis with almost ruining Confederacy, and accused Commissioner North up with starving Union prisoners, demanding his removal.

DARING CAPTURE OF THE STEAMER CHESAPEAKE.

Some excitement has been occasioned by the capture of the Chesapeake, a steamer plying between New York and Portland mentioned in the telegram of Wednesday last. It appears to have been a very bold and desperate movement, planned in St. John, and that arrangements had been made by the parties for some time previously. The St. John papers give full accounts of the affair from which we gather the following:—

It appears that the "Chesapeake" left New York on Saturday last at 4 o'clock, p. m., with a valuable cargo and twenty-two passengers on

board, bound for Portland, Me. On Monday morning, about 1 o'clock, when about 20 miles N. N. W. of Cape Cod, and immediately after the change of watch, a portion of the passengers numbering some fifteen or sixteen rushed on deck and immediately proceeded to take possession of the boat. The Engineer's room was of course one of the first points aimed at. Thither a number of the conspirators moved. The Second Engineer was in charge, and evincing an unwillingness to comply with the commands of his self-constituted rulers, and a disposition to do something desperate, was shot down, three balls passing through his neck.

By this time the Chief Engineer made his appearance. He attempted to raise the body of his comrade, but was ordered to desist, and the order was followed by the firing of a pistol, the contents of which wounded him slightly on the chin, and gave him a fortaste of his fate in case of disobedience. The body of the second Engineer was shortly afterwards consigned to the deep. The Captain, who was in his berth at the commencement of the fray, having been roused by the first mate, hastily dressed, and was proceeding below to ascertain the cause of the trouble, when he was fired at from behind, two or three times. Being unarmed, he ran forward to the fore-castle, followed by a number of the desperadoes, who again fired at him. In all the Captain thought that some eleven shots were discharged; but fortunately for him none of them took effect. Finally he was collared, a pistol pointed at his head, and his surrender commanded in the name of the Confederate States. The Captain was led into the cabin and handcuffed, and a document handed to him, of which the following is a copy:—

"Order

"To Lieut. Commanding, John Chilton Brain. "You are hereby ordered to proceed to the City of New York and State of said, with the following: 1st Lieut. H. A. Parr; 2nd Lieut. David Collins; Sailing Master George Robertson, and a crew of 11 men. You will on arrival there engage passage on board the steamer and use your own discretion as to the proper time and place of capture. Your action towards crew and passengers will be strictly in accordance with the President's instructions. You will as circumstances will permit, bring your prize to the Island of Grand Manan for further orders—Seal Cove Harbor if accessible.

"JOHN PARKER,

"Capt. C. S. Privateer Retribution.

"Dec. 2, 1863."

While a portion of the mysterious sixteen was engaged with the Captain and Engineers, the rest spread themselves over the vessel; and the whizzing of bullets were heard in every direction. The chief mate was hit by two balls—one taking effect in his right knee and the other in his left arm. All the officers and crew were secured and placed in irons. While this part of the plot was being proceeded with, one or two of the conspirators carefully guarded the cabin door, and prevented the six passengers who were not concerned in the affair from coming on deck. They were afterwards allowed their liberty on condition that they would remain quiet—an injunction from which they had no disposition to depart.

The individual who directed the movements of the conspirators, and who appeared to have command, was John C. Brain. This person, so we learned from sources that may be considered reliable, has been for some time in St. John. He is a young man of prepossessing appearance, good manners, and rather pleasing address. He is by birth, some say an Englishman, others a Nova Scotian, but we rather think the former is correct. At a very early age he went to Louisiana. As he advanced to years of discretion he made choice of the Navy as a profession, and we understand, that during his pupilage he served in one of the United States Naval Schools. From this time until the breaking out of the present war we have been unable to learn anything of his movements. When the struggle between both sections of the Union commenced he took up arms in defence of the South, and received the appointment of Lieutenant in the 2nd Kentucky Regiment. He was not very long in active service before he was taken prisoner and conveyed to Fort Lafayette, whence, after a considerable sojourn, he was sent to Fort Warren. There he remained for some time longer, and finally he was exchanged. His next field of operations was in England, where he was sent to transact some business for the Confederacy. On his return he came to St. John, where he remained until a short time ago.

Among the passengers on board was a man named Osburne, formerly captain of a small vessel sailing out of this port called the "Fellow Craft." Learning that he was on board, Brain required him to act as Pilot. Under his direction the steamer was guided to Grand Manan, and brought in at Seal Harbor, doubtless the place designated in the "order" quoted above, where she arrived about 7 o'clock on Tuesday morning.

When off Musquash, or some place in that locality, the crew and passengers of the Chesapeake were ordered on board a Pilot Boat and sent to St. John, resistance on the part of the pilot's crew being useless. The Chesapeake arrived below Partridge Island about 10 o'clock on Tuesday evening. The Pilot Boat reached St. John about 4 o'clock on Wednesday morning, and the Chesapeake steamed down the Bay at 2 o'clock. She is 460 tons Register, and with her cargo are valued at \$180,000.

A Steamer answering the description of the Chesapeake passed Yarmouth harbor on Wednesday 9th. It is reported she went in to Shelburne and we presume got away before any of the Federal cruisers, in search of her, had arrived there.

Latest from Europe!

FRANCE.

The Paris papers believe themselves able to say that the proposal for holding a conference has brought forth such responses as ensure the holding of the congress, although all the Sovereigns invited may not be represented. There is some talk of holding a preliminary congress at Brussels, to arrange the programme, probably with the assistance of King Leopold. It is reported that Austria and England have resolved simply to put in an appearance at the congress, and to make no attempt to carry out any programme of their own. The reply from Russia, has been sent off from St. Petersburg, and is very anxiously expected at Paris. It is supposed that the Czar will accept the invitation conditionally, upon the programme containing nothing offensive to himself. A telegram from Constantinople, published in the French papers, says that the Sultan has made a favorable reply to the Emperor's letter, and has expressed his intention to attend the congress in person. The Grand Turk attending in person a Congress of States in Paris will be something new indeed. Sunday night's Paris papers says that fifteen Sovereigns out of Twenty have accepted the invitation, and that not one has declined it. The five Sovereigns not accounted for, however, include all the Great Powers. The Patrie says, "under reserve," that the Emperor Napoleon, without presuming to settle the programme of the congress, has indicated his opinion that the affairs of Poland, Venice, the German Duchies, and the Danubian Principalities should form the subjects of conference. Not a word about Rome, the greatest anomaly of the age!

A bill has been submitted to the French Council of State, asking supplementary credits for ninety-one millions of francs, stated to be required to meet the expenses of the Mexican expedition.

Wednesday, 18th, a ceremony of a very peculiar character was performed in the office of the French Minister of Interior. All the editors of the Paris journals were summoned to the bureau of the Minister, admitted to him one by one, and duly cautioned to be respectful in their language and guarded in their remarks on the election petitions now before the Legislative Body.

DENMARK.

The death of Fredrick VII of Denmark has quickly raised a crop of difficulties. In addition to the assumptions of the Duke of Augustenburg, a claimant has appeared, in the person of the Duke of Oldenburg, for the Danish throne. The Duke has protested to the Danish Government against the "illegal accession" of Prince Christian, and reserves to himself the right of taking further steps. The Duke of Augustenburg, in the meantime, is not idle. He has made a personal address to the Emperor of Austria, has conferred with M. Von Bismarck at Berlin, and has had a long interview with the French and Russian Ambassadors in that capital. He has furthermore noted to the Federal Diet, as well as to all the Sovereigns of the Germanic Confederation, his assumption of his rights in the duchies of Schleswig-Holstein and Lauenburg, and has appointed a privy councillor to conduct his affairs. All the notices of motion with respect to Schleswig-Holstein succession were handed to a committee. A protest on the part of Austria and Prussia against the Danish constitutional law was also received by the Diet.

On the side of Denmark similar commotion and activity prevails. A Minister has been appointed for Holstein, six ships of war, two of them iron-plated schooners, are being fitted out, and 11,000 soldiers have been called up. The Holstein officials have received orders to take the oath of allegiance to Christian IX., a measure which will at once bring the Holsteiners to the test. It is said that a number of the officials intend to comply.

The coronation of King Christian will take place, according to the Copenhagen journals, in the Danish chapel early in next January, and will be accompanied by great pomp and festivity.

PRUSSIA.

The King of Prussia some months ago issued an ordinance limiting the liberty of the press to a most serious extent; and to that ordinance was given the force of law. The Government asked the Chambers to give its sanction to that ordinance, and to make a change in the law of the press which would place journalism under the thumb of the Government. Of course, the Chamber refused to give any such sanction to a gross breach of the Constitution. The Chamber by a large majority, refused to sanction the ordinance, pronounced it to be unnecessary and unconstitutional, and expressly declared that no limitation of the liberty of the press could be effected by any Royal ordinance. For once, the King appears to have bowed to the authority of the constitution and of the representative Chamber. A royal decree was published on Saturday, withdrawing the ordinance on the press which the Deputies so severely censured in their resolution.

RUSSIA AND POLAND.

Arrests continue to take place in Warsaw, both of men and women. The people in the governments of Wilna, Witebsk, Kowno, and Grodno, have given the most palpable denial to the loyal addresses extorted by General Mloga-vieff. From these governments an address has been issued, signed by 250,000 persons, and expressing entire devotion to the National Government.