AMERICAN SENTINEL, AND GENERAL ADVERTISER.

The American Sentinel.

WESTMINSTER:

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10, 1862.

Flag of the free heart's hope and home!
By angel hands to Valor given!
Thy stars have lit the welkin dome,
And all thy hues were born in Heaven.
Forever float that standard sheet! [us,
Where breathes the foe but falls before
With freedom's soil beneath our feet,
And Freedom's banner streaming o'er us?

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The Last Blow to Secession.

Before the arrest of Mason and Slidell by Capt. Wilkes, says the Baltimore Clipper, it was evident to every well-informed observer of events, that the rebellion was rapidly approaching its end. Its resources were utterly exhausted. The promises of its leaders were unfulfilled. It had accomplished nothing but ruin to the Southern States which had yielded to its influence. It was manifestly quailing before the formidable preparations of the Government to crush it. The apparent tardiness of these preparations was only a slow torture to the men who had sown the wind of secession, and saw plainly they would ere long be compelled to reap the whirlwind of punishment they had invoked. The people whom they had deluded and betrayed and oppressed were fleeing in terror from the seaboard and the border. Their confidence had turned to doubt. Their bluster had subsided into a whine. They waited only for the striking of the blow which all foresaw would forever crush the rebellion and liberate its victims.

The seizure of the rebel emissaries on board of a British mail packet, revived the sinking hopes of Rebeldom. The expectation of the long promised foreign aid was renewed. The prospect of a war between the United States and Great Britain was hailed with loud acclamations of delight. The rebel sympathizers in the border States, whose treasonable utterances had been hushed were emboldened again to speak out. They openly proclaimed their sympathy with Great Britain. They vied with the excited English populace in denouncing the outrage upon the English flag. They boldly expressed the hope that our Government would be blotted from the map of nations by the tread of the armed heel of Great Britain. In the fervency of their treason, they surpassed in vileness the traitors of 1812, and exceeded in bitterness the tories of the Revolution. They forgot all else in their impious prayers that this Government would be compelled to surrender the Trent prisoners, and laughed with ghoulish glee at the announcement that they would not be given up. They believed that the recognition of the independence of the Southern Confederacy by foreign powers was near at hand, and that vast armies and navies of England and France would be brought to aid their sinking and desperate cause.

In this as in every other hope upon which their malignant treason has fed, they were doomed to bitterest disappointment. The honesty and sagacity of the Administration at Washington has blighted their hopes of succor from abroad and left the rebellion more than ever hopeless and waning. Their bubble has been opportunely pricked, and their dreams of success have suddenly vanished, leaving them to the worse than Cimmerian darkness of blank despair.

The Government is to-day stronger than it has ever been since the first outbreak of the rebellion. It is stronger in the affections and confidence of the loyal people.—It is stronger in the estimation of all other nations. It is stronger in having effectually averted all danger of European interference in the settlement of our domestic difficulties. It is stronger in having vindicated its consistency before the world, and in having received from Great Britain the recognition of a long cherished principle for which the second war of Independence was fought in vain. It is stronger in having won the approbation of all the other great powers of Europe, in such wise, that if Great Britain should now attempt to find another pretext to make war upon us, we should find in both France and Russia allies against her.

There is now nothing left to be done except to concentrate all the vast energies and resources of the Government in the war against rebellion—the war for the restoration of the Union, the Constitution and the laws in the despot-ridden Southern States. By the settlement of the Trent difficulty we are happily freed from all external annoyances, and may address ourselves earnestly to the task before us. Let there be patience and confidence. The Administration and the Commanding General are, we know, as anxious for the speedy consummation of this work as the most eager of the people. They are making no unnecessary delay. Their hearts are in the achievement of a Union success. They intend that there shall be occasion for only one blow to crush out the insurrection. The next thing to be done, and it will be done speedily and surely, will be to give that last blow to Treason and Rebellion.

The Governor's Message.

The last Message of Governor Hicks was transmitted to the Legislature on Thursday of last week. It is a thoroughly business like document, confined almost entirely to a notice of matters of State interest. Closing an intercourse with the Legislature and people of the State, held in times of unparalleled excitement and trouble, he with but a brief allusion to his own course and a complimentary notice of his successor, retires from the marked position he has occupied, leaving to others the judgment upon his actions, with no elaborate attempt to influence a decision. His attitude in this is stamped with his usual good taste and confidence in the honest judgment of the people, and will be properly appreciated by them. The time to do his noble patriotism full justice in the prominent part he has acted with reference to our national affairs will come when the current excitements have passed away; and there is no fear but that he will then be regarded as one of the truest bulwarks the nation has ever had, in the part he was called upon to take in preserving its integrity.

In expressing the satisfaction he feels on retiring from a position almost unequalled in the harrassing cares that have surrounded it almost from his accession to it, the best wishes of every patriot for his welfare and happiness will go with him. He retires with the well deserved plaudits of the loyal men of the whole nation; and it is to be hoped that he may live for many a year to see the fruits of his noble and courageous fidelity to principle, in the renewed glory of a great nationality, whilst those who are to inherit its blessings after us will dwell upon his name with those grateful remembrances due to those who have aided in saving their country.

The "Democrat."

We have long since concluded not to notice any thing coming from our *learned* neighbor of the *Democrat*, but occasionally he puts forth such atrocious misrepresentations, which evidently have a tendency to delude those whose sense of reason, and brains are on a par with his own, that, upon this occasion, we deem it our duty to say a word to those whom he is endeavoring to drag with him into the infamous abyss of treason and disgrace. Of the greatness of its Editor, we have not a word to say, countless millions attest that fact, which posterity will ever cherish with feelings of pride, that such a genius should live in the age of their ancestors. His writings and predictions will be referred to in centuries yet to come, as the wisest of the age.—But, alas for human greatness, man must die, yet, though his body perish, his good deeds will never be forgotten, but will be remembered by those who come after him, as deeds worthy of their imitation. Of his talents, though latent, we have nothing to say, for we feel assured that this community, at least, are convinced of its profundity, but however misdirected or misguided such a profound mind may wander, it gives us cause for regret that a mind so great, and talents so latent should be perverted to the destruction of his government and his fellow men. We know that the circulation of that journal is but limited, yet, at the same time there are those who are deluded by its false cry of Democracy, to cover his treason, and we think that the occasional exposure of the perfidious doctrines advocated in its columns may have a salutary effect upon those who love their country, and are disposed to sustain it.

The learned Editor indulges in such profound articles, the points of which are not perceptible to ordinary minds, and as we are a people who believe that we are endowed with a liberal quantity of common sense, and also believe that his patrons are alike gifted, we would simply suggest, (in all kindness, of course,) that it would not only be gratifying to us, but we think to them, to give us such articles as we can comprehend. Now to go back to his "Allegory," which appeared a few weeks since, we plead total ignorance to its meaning. He speaks about "breaking looking glasses," well, all we have to say is, you can keep on breaking them, but really we cannot see the sense of your doing so. We presume it is an attempt to illustrate the condition of our country, that is, we are forced to that conclusion. If that is his meaning, we feel confident that no man in this community would rejoice more heartily over the total destruction of this government than the distinguished Editor of the Democrat. Heretofore he has put forth sentiments advocating the recognition of treason, in the shape of the so-called Southern Confederacy, whose bitter fruits are not only reaped by themselves, but by the presence of their sympathisers in our midst, have brought almost the same calamities upon us here. In the same article he closes by saying that "he has done all in his power to preserve the Union." We have done this, while you and your allies have done your utmost to destroy this, the best government ever reared by mortal man. God forbid that such principles as he and his "corporal guard" of allies advocate, should ever find a foothold in this State.

This *true patriot*, in his last issue says: "But the Democratic party has not been out of power one year when we find the Union divided, the American name humiliated, reproached, disgraced." Will he be kind enough to divest himself of party venom and prejudice, and clothe himself in the garb of truth, if possible, and tell the naked truth, before God and man, to the best of his knowledge (though limited) and belief, WHO DID DESTOY THIS GOVERNMENT, if it is destroyed. If it is possible for him to do so, he cannot help but say that the scum of Democracy, which was conceived in treason, nourished and cherished by that arch traitor Buchanan, Floyd and others who are now in arms against the government, Lowe, Johnson, Wallis, and his own party of this State, were the ones who did all they could to destroy it, and endeavored to desolate our own fair homes and firesides by revolutionizing Maryland, and putting us in the same sad condition that Missouri and our sister border States are now placed, by the rash and damnable leaders of partizan vice and lust for power. This profound dissertation upon the release of his worthy leaders, Mason and Slidell, we think excels by far the genius of a Grotius, Puffendorf, Vattell, or any distinguished author upon the Law of Nations. We can compare it to no production, either of ancient or modern origin, for it surely surpasses anything that has as yet appeared upon that subject, and for a like production we are obliged to wait in anxious suspense, until the Carroll County Democrat again appears, by which time we either expect to hear that Jeff Davis has or has not advanced for the the purpose of freeing our people from "Lincoln's hirelings," or retreated to preserve the sacred soil of South Carolina from invasion, or that Lincoln has been deposed, and the Editor of the Democrat put upon the throne, clothed with all the authority of a monarch, as our only salvation. If such should be our destiny, may the Lord help us to be loyal subjects, and to him alone will we pay our homage. *

Rebels Tired of Rebellion.

The following is an extract of a letter from an officer of the 13th regiment Massachusetts Volunteers, dated at Williamsport, Md., 25th inst;

"We have had quite a week of excitement, more or less fighting all the time to make the thing interesting. We are in hopes soon to sit down in the Old Dominion, for already are the leaders of the rebellion in this part of Virginia tired of their game.

"A Captain in the rebel service said to a Union man this week—on giving him a pass to leave the State with his family—'I am quite tired of this matter, I feel sorry to see the best families leaving the State, but I know they will go.'

"I know that the people are in great distress for the necessaries of life. Salt cannot be had in Martinsburg at any price, and all the dry goods in the place could be put in a one horse wagon. Martinsburg is a place of 8,000 inhabitants.—Things have come to such a pass that many are in favor of a return to the Union.

"They feel they have been duped, and are now suffering the consequences. The majority of the people in this section of Virginia are in favor of the Union. They intended for Union and for the Government and were betrayed. If the blockade continues, the people will rebel against their present condition."

News of the Week.

A special despatch from Washington informs us that Thursday morning the Federal gunboat Anacosta attacked the Confederate batteries at Cockpit Point, and shelled it for about two hours, the battery not replying. The battery at Possum-Nose is the nearest one to the city of Washington, and has rifled cannon, which have fired shells that reached the mouth of the Matawomen creek several miles distant.

A number of Federal officers arrived at Fortress Monroe on Wednesday, from Richmond being the first of the two hundred and fifty prisoners to be released in exchange for the Confederate prisoners sent South last week. The remainder were expected to arrive under a flag of truce on Friday.

Reports made at the Medical Department show that in the camps, containing one hundred and eighteen thousand men, there is a less proportion of sickness than in the same number of men in any large city.

General Lander has so far recovered from the effects of his wound as to be able to ride, and has been detailed to supersede General Kelly, on the western section of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. He has obtained from the Secretary of War an order giving him as a body-guard the company of Massachusetts sharp-shooters which was so effective in skirmishing under his orders, on the day after the Ball's Bluff affair.

The plan now suggested to raise the revenue, and which meets with the sanction of the President and Cabinet, is to levy a tax of five cents upon each telegraphic message passing over any line.

The failure of the tanks to take the last fifty millions does not disappoint the Treasury Department, as they expected it, and have made calculations accordingly.

General Benham has been released from arrest, and ordered to duty at once. The Court of Inquiry ignored the charges as soon as they were made.

The preparations for General Burnside's Naval Expedition are rapidly being completed, and it will probably soon sail.—There are now at Annapolis 14 steamers, 1 propeller, 4 ships, 3 barks, 1 brig, 11 schooners, 5 floating batteries, besides 2 little despatch steamers—in all, 41 vessels. Gen. Burnside and staff have also taken possession of the Picket, a handsome little propeller of 400 tons, and have made it the flag-ship of the transport fleet.—The preparations are all on the most extensive scale.

Commodore Goldsborough is here inspecting the transport fleet. Probably all the vessels ordered to rendezvous at this place are now here, and most of them are in readiness to sail. The regiments are also ready to embark, but whether the order will come to-morrow or next week it is difficult to tell. Several provision-laden schooners have already sailed from here for Fortress Monroe, and others are on the way there from New York, which will not be reported at Annapolis.

Major John Wright has also arrived, with five companies of the Fifth Rhode Island Regiment, detailed for the expedition.

A private despatch from Williamsport states that about three P. M. on Tuesday a Confederate force (number not given,) with one gun attacked the railroad workmen between Paxton's Cut and Cherry Run, eleven miles east of Hancock.—They were repulsed and routed by the Federal protective force, with a loss of twenty-killed. The assailants were protecting the Confederate laborers who were engaged in taking up the track.

Official advices from Williamsport show the necessity of making some correction of the previous statement in regard to the affair of Tuesday on the railroad.

Detachments of the Thirteenth Massachusetts and First Maryland participated in the repulse and route of the Confederate forces. Our men killed and buried twenty-nine of the enemy, and it is supposed many afterwards died of their wounds. Our loss is reported by private sources to have been five wounded—none killed.

At Berlin above the point of Rocks, an affair occurred on the 31st, which shows the necessity of extreme caution in dealing with our enemies. Two men approached the river, on the Virginia side, with a flag of truce, and begged to be brought over, stating they were refugees. Captain Pardee, of Company A, Twenty-eighth Pennsylvania, gave orders to so dispose of his force as to cover a boat to bring them off, in the meantime entertaining those on the opposite side by conversation, to distract their attention. When all was ready, he dispatched a sergeant and two men in a boat to bring them off. As the boat approached the shore, a company of dismounted Confederate cavalry showed themselves on the hill above, and fired a volley upon the boat. The crew threw themselves overboard towards the Maryland shore, and thus protected, pulled the boat across. In the meantime, Pardee's concealed riflemen opened on the cavalry with such effect as to cause a stampede, with great loss in wounded, at least. One of the boatmen had an ear lacerated by a ball from the cavalry.

Dispatches from Missouri have been received at headquarters, announcing the capture of the notorious Jeff. Owens, Col. Jones and fifty of their bridge burning gang, near Martinsburg, Adrain county, by Gen. Schofield, commander of the State militia, and that the various guerilla bands along the North Missouri Railroad have been pretty thoroughly scattered.

Six regiments of U. S. troops have left Ottoville and Tipton for Weston on an expedition, the effects of which are unknown.

On Saturday General Prentiss, with four hundred and fifty men, dispersed nine hundred Rebels, under Colonel Dorsey, at Mount Sion, Boone county, Missouri, killing and wounding one hundred and fifty and capturing thirty-five prisoners, ninety-five horses, and one hundred and five guns. Our loss was only three killed and eleven wounded. The Rebels have burned another train on the North Missouri Railroad. They say that they intend to destroy all the cars on the road.

More rebel outrages are reported. A boy named James Ryer was hanged till his face was black, in order to force him to reveal the place where some guns were concealed, but the boy proved game, and the rebels did not get the guns. The rebels took an old man named Edwards, near Wet Glaz Creek, beat him with gun barrels and marched him to Springfield. They took Alfred Smith Peters, a Union man residing near Bear Creek, five miles this side of Lebanon, and shot sixty balls into him.

A letter from Flag-officer Dupont to George D. Morgan, of New York, dated Port Royal, Dec. 24, says:

"Matters have gone on prospering so far as our naval operations are concerned, and I trust all will go equally well with our military men.

"The occupation of this wonderful sheet of water, with its tributary rivers, inlets and outlets, entrances and sounds running in all directions, cutting off effectually all water communication between Savannah and Charleston, has been like driving a wedge into the flanks of the Rebels between these two important cities.

"Advices from Port Royal indicate that Commodore Dupont is preparing for a new naval demonstration. Gunboats are concentrating and a large number of armed launches are practising in his work of assisting in the landing of troops. About ten thousand troops could be spared from Hilton Head in addition to General Stevens' brigade, to operate against Charleston