Huron Signal.

GODERICH, C. W., JAN. 5, 1865.

THE MILITIA DRAFT.

Owing to the length of the Return of Convictions we are not able to publish the list of names of the militia men drafted, up to the hour of publication. The entire list will appear in our next Weekly. An extra edition will be published. Orders from the country promptly discharged.—Now is the time to subscribe for the Weekly *SIGNAL!*

THE OBJECT OF THE FENIANS.

The great object of the Fenian Brotherhood in America, as divulged, through their chosen organs, is neither more nor less than the liberation of Ireland from "the galling yoke of bondage," "the tyrannical heel of the oppressor," or, in other words, the sway of Great Britain. It is a repetition of the story of '98 and the numerous petty rebellions that have been concocted since. Now, as before, there is something very vague about the *manner* in which Irish Independence is to be accomplished. The blatant orators at Jersy City meetings or Chicago Fairs rant about their wrongs, their ancient rights, and the necessity of striking a blow immediately for the attainment of their darling object. We can furnish an army of 50,000 men, says the Chicago Brotherhood, on condition that we are led at once by the shortest route against the enemy. Now, even the shortest route to Ireland, involves the passage of the Atlantic ocean, and we think there would be more logical coherence in the preachings of these fire-eating patriots if they would candidly tell their brethren how they intend to cross the ocean, and *what they mean to do* when they sight the shores of Europe.—True, here is Canada, a dependency of the British Crown. *It* might be attacked, and *perhaps* it might be conquered. Its fair fields might be laid waste, its women and children turned out of house and home, and its stout men decimated by battle, but *what then?* Canada is neither Ireland nor England. Having wreaked their blood-thirsty vengeance upon Canada, how much nearer would the Fenians be to the liberation of Ireland? Or by what process of reasoning can it be shown that such a conquest would conduce to the ultimate downfall of the hereditary enemy of a certain class of Irishmen? These ultra-patriots base their assumptions on the righteousness of their own cause—on the inherent justice of their claims. Why then should they desire to wreak vengeance upon Canada, which is just as much the home of true freedom and enlightened toleration as even the United States? Here, we have ever sought to bestow the precious boon of civil and religious liberty to *all*, irrespective of class or creed. This fact will, we believe, be attested by every intelligent Roman Catholic in the land, and yet the Fenians, regardless of our noble institutions—unmindful of the fact that we seek at this moment to establish a Nationality, under the flag of which every man's religious or political opinions shall be as firmly secured as the foundations of our own hills, would strike a blow for Ireland, *against Canada.* As for old England itself, they know full well that the mightiest efforts they could make would rebound like the surf from her iron-bound shores. Nay, they know in their hearts that the sleepless navy of Britain could send to the bottom of the ocean the largest army they could raise long before it set foot on any one of the three Isles. They *must* know this from the experiences of the past and the incontrovertable facts of the present. Surely their blind leaders are not devoid of at least a glimmering of common-sense intelligence that they cannot comprehend the utter absurdity and wickedly suicidal ending such a project must have. We rejoice, however, that the Fenian plots hatched in darkness have become fully known. To be forewarned, they say, is to be forearmed, and knowing the chief danger that threatens it only remains for us to strengthen our hands and nerve our hearts to face it in a spirit worthy of ourselves and our forefathers.

HURON RIFLES.

The following report of an interesting Meeting of the Huron Rifles, relative to the retirement of Capt. Seymour, has been handed in for publication:

"On Monday, 19th ult., after drill, Lieut. Hays addressed the company on a subject which he believed was a source of regret to it. He meant the retirement of Capt. Seymour, whom they were aware had sent in his resignation two months before, and with reference to which they had unanimously passed the address he now about to read, but which they had till now, an opportunity of presenting, but he (Capt. Seymour had resigned, danger the H.) was convinced that if willing to accept Capt. S. would be most and he believed them to the front, company felt as he every man in the great advantage to them it would be a with them if ordered on service Capt. S. (Cheers.) They all knew how service.—ago, when war was thought to be years ent from the Trent affair, how promptly raised and organized the Huron Rifles totally unaided, drilled it for a period of 8 months, and up to the present day he had never spared time, trouble or expense to promoting their efficiency. (Cheers.) He could say more on this subject, but the presence of Capt. S. restrained him, and on asking him to accept of the sword which they wished to present to him, he begged Capt. S. to accept the best thanks of the Huron Rifles for all his exertions on their behalf, and their sincere wishes for his health, happiness and prosperity. (Continued cheering.)

Lieut. Hays then read the following Address, signed by himself, Ensign Davison, Judge Cooper and 36 non-commissioned officers and men of the corps, and by Lieut Hays on behalf of the absentees, the Address having been unanimously carried at previous meetings:

"Dear Sir.—We, the undersigned officers, non commissioned officers, members and privates of the Huron Rifles, take leave to express our regret at your resignation of the command of that corps, and convey to you our best thanks for the deep interest which you have invariably displayed to promote its efficiency from the moment of its formation to the present time.

We beg to tender you a Sword, as a slight token of our esteem and regard for you as our Commanding Officer, and should you ever have occasion to draw it in defence of our loved Country, be assured that all your old comrades of 'The Huron Rifles' would be glad to serve under you, feeling convinced that in you we should have a leader in whose hands, on active service or otherwise, the honour of the corps would always be safe.

With our best wishes for your health, happiness and prosperity, we remain,

dear sir,

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed as above.)

Lieut. Hays, having read the Address presented the same to Capt. Seymour, who said: Lieut. Hays and comrades of the Huron Rifles, I feel deeply gratified for the kind feelings expressed in the flattering address you have just presented.—I cannot but feel that it is more due to your kindness and good feeling than to my merits. I can only lay claim to having always endeavored to do my duty without fear, favor or affection, and to an ardent desire to see you one of the best volunteer corps in Canada. Lieut Hays and you have done me but justice in feeling that I am ready to accompany you on any duty on which you may be ordered, but, having sent in my resignation two months back, I should feel the greatest delicacy in delaying, for however short a period, the promotion of the officers whom I have recommended, and whom I believe you will find zealous and efficient in the discharge of their respective trusts. I entreat you to pay the strictest obedience to their orders, for without implicit obedience no military organization can be *thoroughly* efficient.—Most sincerely do I hope that this fine country may always remain exempt from the fearful evils of war, but, if Providence wills it otherwise, I feel assured that the Huron Rifles will do their duty to their Queen, and to their Country, in such a way as to merit their approbation, and to be gratefully remembered by the County whose name they bear. (Cheers.) Comrades, once more I thank you and heartily wish you both individually and collectively health and happiness, and now, before saying good-bye, I must ask you to join me in giving three cheers for our most gracious sovereign, Queen Victoria. (Cheers.) It is needless to say that this was done with a will.

Lieut. Hays then proposed three cheers for Capt. Seymour, which were heartily given, and the proceedings terminated.

THE ELECTION.

In the absence of a Mayoralty contest the Municipal election yesterday and today was unusually quiet. In some of the Wards, however, quite a stir was made.

St. Patrick's Ward returns the old candidates, Messrs. Runciman, Cameron and Horton, have been returned by acclamation.

The following is the state of the poll at the close in the other wards:

St. George's.—A. Smith 41, McDougall 53, Watson 24, McKay 45.

St. Andrew's—Longworth 41, Dancy 57, Parsons 16, Booth 43, J. B. Gordon 4, Davis 33.

St. David's—Gibbons 81, Hays 86, Clifford 60, Stewart 36, Wallace 9, Fraser 2, Mitchell 1.

The Councillors for 1865 will therefore be Messrs. Cameron, Horton, Runciman, A. Smith, McDougall, D. McKay, Longworth, Dancy, Booth, Gibbons, Hays and Clifford.

The Majority against the "Rate Bill" is overwhelming.

"HONOR CUI HONOR."

MR. EDITOR,—It always affords me great pleasure to acknowledge merit wherever I find it, and as this is the season of complements I deem it the more appropriate time to pay a tribute, which I feel is justly due. No doubt it is known by my fellow townsmen generally, that for some months past a Ward School has been established in St. Patrick's Ward—and perhaps as generally known that it has been, since its establishment, under the immediate management of Miss Longworth. But it may not be quite as generally known how it has been conducted, as all cannot be presumed to have children attending it. I am one, however, two of whose children have had the good fortune of there commencing their educational career, and since they began I have carefully noted their progress. And if, sir, you have children in attendance there (as I am informed you have) you will agree with me in stating that you have frequently been very agreeably surprised, during that short period, at the rapidity with which they acquired the rudiments of the English language. If all our public schools here were attended with equal success our people would have much less reason to *grumble*. But I regret to say that, at least, before the opening of the Ward School, the junior divisions of our Central School were not *all that could be desired.* Since that time I have not paid so much attention to them, but, then, many to whom I spoke on the subject were anything but well pleased. It is hoped, though, that the establishment of the Ward Schools will enable those now having the control of those divisions to discharge their duty with more efficiency, and consequently with more satisfaction to the public.

Trusting you will give this an insertion in your journal, D.

HOWICK.

It is too common for the inhabitants of this country to forget what their country was in its earlier stages of settlement, and to imagine that the habitans of the backwoods are not aware of the amenities of life, in fact they often consider them as being in a state of semi-civilization, and I must confess this impression upon my mind was strengthened by the account I saw of certain dinners that had taken place in the County of Huron. But I am willing to say that during a visit to the village of Howick, this impression was completely removed, and I think it my duty through this town to the public in general, and through the chaudium of your newspaper how this chaudium of your news-effected. The ladies in my opinion was English Aid Society" in "Church of Dinner and Concert, I resolved to get up a and I must say that the dinner to attend, laid with a taste and elegance which were have done credit to a first class hotel, and the viands would have gladdened the heart of the veriest epicure.

But a "change came o'er the spirit of the scene." The clatter of knives and forks commenced, and the guests appeared to have a lively appreciation of the eatables, for they disappeared with marvel-rapidity. Turkeys were seen "a moment fat—then bones forever," and after dinner none of the numerous diners had like Cassius, "a lean and hungry look." From the dinner tables we went to the concert room, which was tastefully decorated—and here our minds were soothed with strains of sweet music from the village choir. I cannot enumerate all the pieces sung, but to my great surprise and gratification, they concluded their sacred music with Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus," which was well sung. There was one thing, however, detrimental to its effect, and that was the paucity of performers.—There were enough, however, to give any one who never heard it an idea of the magnificence, richness and beauty of its chords.—The secular music was opened with "Merry Christmas," which wafted the mind away to England's Christmas, with its large yule fire, and the flames dancing merrily in the ample place; the hanging mistletoe, and many revellers within, whilst the sweet voices of the carrollers were blending in unison, singing the songs of the nativity in the streets—"The Pilgrim Fathers" was also finely sung, and Messrs. Gibson and Scott Worcester, sang some glees and catches in first rate style.—Mr. Scott's rendering of "Twit a Shear," or the Highlander in Glasgow, was inimitable. His pronunciation evidently shows him north of the Grampians, for it would have been as impossible for an Englishman to have sung it as for an Ephraimite to say "Shibboleth." The Howick String Band was in attendance. The leader, Mr. Roberts, is an excellent flutist. Their music had a powerful effect upon the audience, who at the lively measures were unable to keep their feet still. One of the performers seemed not to appreciate the effect of his music and up the "W. Apollo Hotel" and informed the audience held not play for them to dance. Miss Worthington presided at the Melodeon with taste an ability. Having given a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Campbell Wallace, who occupied the chair, and whose interesting and humorous remarks tended greatly to enliven the audience, the meeting broke up and all went away apparently highly pleased with the evening's entertainment.

BARITONE.

WROXETER.

FIRE.—On Wednesday morning about 8 o'clock, smoke and flames were seen issuing from the Sash and Furniture Factory occupied by Mr. N. Allen, notwithstanding the great efforts to subdue them. The flames spread with great rapidity, and it was only by the greatest activity that the Saw and Grist Mills belonging to Messrs. Gibson were saved. The end of the saw-mill next the factory was in a blaze, but was soon knocked out into the dam, and a liberal supply of water kept the charred boards of the grist mill from taking fire. We understand Mr. Allan's loss is upwards of $1200, none of which is covered by insurance. A subscription was, however, commenced, which was being liberally filled up, and we trust to see Mr. Allan, who is much respected, soon started to work again in a new shop.

TOWNSHIP OF STANLEY.

VOTE ON THE TEMPERANCE BILL.

From our Correspondent.

The usually quiet village of Varna has been in a state of excitement yesterday and to-day, 29th and 30th. The Good Templars and Temperance men of the Township, wishing to strike a deadly blow at old King Alcohol, had, in accordance with Dunkin's Temperance Bill, placed the necessary requisition in the hands of the Tp. Clerk, demanding a poll. The Clerk, as in duty bound, gave the required notice, and appointed the days mentioned for the polling.

Some might doubt the prudence, but none could doubt the pluck of the Temperance men of Stanley in thus throwing the gauntlet defiantly into the face of the serried ranks of the old King who has reigned almost supreme since shortly after Noah left the Ark, and whose battalions contain hosts of veterans who have seen service on many a bloody field, but they reckoned without their host and have fitled. We breathe freely again—the great innovation is not to be perpetrated. The timorous mortals who were not sure about it and said they were afraid it wouldn't work well, may now come out of their hiding places and enjoy the hospitality of mine host and take a little something at the bar, to warm their if they are cold or cool themselves if they are warm.

The result of these two days polling must convince the most rampant teetotler that the people of Stanley are yet a long way from a Maine Liquor Law, when they will not even go the length of Dunkin's Bill, which allows them to buy or sell five gallons or 12 bottles full.

The votes were taken in the little old School House, which, by the way, is a disgrace to Varna and Stanley. One would think there was wealth and pride enough in the township to have a decent Town Hall.

Considering the small space at command the officials maintained good order and acted in a very impartial manner, and, although I watched them closely I could not tell, yet, whether they would have voted 'yea' or 'nay'. With all the ardor of young soldiers, the Temperance men made a rush to the Polls at the opening—took the lead, and kept it throughout the day. They were at one time 30 or 40 ahead—their spirits rose high—they were sure of victory. But it was evident that the old stagers were only holding their wind for a long race they knew there was another day coming and busied themselves in marshalling their forces for a flank movement in the morning. As it was they began to gain gradually on their opponents in the afternoon and at the close of the poll were only five behind, the vote standing 100 for License, and 105 no license.

At times, during the day the scene on the street was rather amusing. An auctioneer, taking advantage of the large gathering tried to vend his wares, and although he had a great variety, from a tin plate to a cow—he appeared to make little headway. The people had come to vote not to buy. Seeing that goods wouldn't sell, and thinking that gas might perhaps take, an elderly gentleman, whose white locks, rather well formed head and finely elaborated abdomen, making in all a respectable appearance, mounted a sleigh and held forth to the crowd. I tried to keep track of him, but he was very erratic, wandering from Taverns to Municipal Corruption, from that to streets in Bayfield, and from these into the Bayfield river, where of course your correspondent could not follow him. It all ended in a laugh, from which my attention was drawn to a side discussion going on between two individuals, on the License Question. A violent teetotler was trying to prove to his neighbour that there was no use for taverns; the neighbor, an honest Dutchman, wanted to know what he would do, or how he would get along, if there were no taverns, when he went from home to see his team. 'Why,' said the teetotaler, 'there will be plenty of Temperance places, good stabling, and plenty to eat for your horses, and plenty to eat for yourself, and you will get as much tea and coffee as you like to drink.' 'Vell, replied the Dutchman, 'dem is vera goot for der horses, and dem is very goot for mine eating, but me like a little fuddle in mine drinking.' He stepped inside and voted for the Taverns. Long may he live to drink lager beer, the honest Dutchman!

This morning there was running to and fro, in hot haste. The roads were good, and both parties made great efforts, and every body was brought out that could come out. But it was up-hill work with the Temperance men—they soon lost ground after the Poll opened. The tavern interest took the lead, and carried the day by 32 of a majority. The state of the Polls at the close being, 185 for License, and 153 no License. So ended the first attempt in Stanley to smite the License system. The Temperance men made a good run, and if they gain in numbers as fast for the two years to come as they have done for the past two, they will not have a tavern in Stanley three years hence.

To the honor of the people of Stanley, it must be said, that even on this most exciting question they have maintained their character for a peace-loving people. There were prophesyings, of fights and broken heads, but all has passed off quietly, and nobody hurt.

The Temperance men of the adjoining township of Hay intend trying their strength on the License question in a few weeks, but I doubt they will be worse defeated than their friends in Stanley.

EXAMINATION OF SCHOOL TEACHERS.

The examination of School Teachers before the Board of Public Instruction for the County of Huron, took place on Wednesday and Thursday last. The attendance on the part of teachers and aspirants to educational honors was larger than we have even seen before. The First and Third classes were examined on the first day, and every one of the large number entering succeeding in obtaining a certificate of some kind. Certificates were granted as follows:—

1ST CLASS.—Peter McDonald, during pleasure; Hugh Ross, do.; Andrew Duff, do.; Alex Carrol, do; Thos Carry, do; Chester Prouty, one year; F. Humphrey, do; Margaret Campbell, during pleasure; Benj. Gee, one year; Christina Cameron, do.; Rich Everett, do.; David Montgomery, during pleasure; Rich Adams, one year; Wm Jamieson, during pleasure; David Hunter, do.; Catherine Burns, one year; Anna McLennan, do.; Euphemia McLennan, do.; Matthew Hutchinson, during pleasure; Eliza Hutchinson, do.; Thos Farrow, do.; Geo Welsh, do.; Jane McGill, one year; Ellen Bay, do.; Wm Symington, during pleasure; Jas Stitt, do; Robert Montgomery, during pleasure.

2ND CLASS.—Caroline L. McLeod, 1 year; Rich Heks, do; John McFadden, do.; Wm Murdock, do.; David Hamil, do.; John Murray, do.; Pascila Nolan, do.; Thos Scott, during pleasure; Margaret Kerr, 1 year; John Isbister, during pleasure; Jane Longworth, one year; Jo McLeod, 2 years; Jas McGregor, do.; Samuel McIlvaine, do; Benj Darcey, do.; Emily Moran, do.; Alex Stuart, 2 years; Martha Taylor, 1 year; Mirilla Grant, do.; Hugh Gaulay 2 years; Geo Wright, 1 year; Richd Whitney, 2 years; Geo Shepherd, 1 year; Dan McDonald, do; Wm Gerrond, during pleasure; Lachlan McMillan, 1 year; Hugh McEwing, do.; Thos Johnston, do.; D. Bossman, do; Nesbitt Wellwood, do.; Wm Brown, do.; James Watson, do.; Elizabeth Nasmyth, do.; Thos Blair, do.; Chas McLellan, do.; Patrick Cantillon, do; Cornelius Coughlin, do; Daniel Whiteford, do.

3RD CLASS.—Eliza Woodman, 1 year; Emma Newton, do. Francis White, do.; Wm Earngay, do; Jane Nasmyth, do.; Eliza Mountcastle, do.; John Welsh, do.; Ralph Sturgeon, do; Mary Ryan, do.; Geo Eyvel, do.; Wm. Bannatyne, do.; John Mackie, do.; Wm Autchison, do.; Margaret McArthur do.; Christina St Clair, do.; Mary Ann Dale, 6 months; Alex McArthur, 1 year; John Markis, 1 year; Anne E. Hoare, do.; Alex McDougall, do.; Clara Morgan, do.; William McKinnon, do.; Alex Richards, do.; Mary L. Fawcett, do, David Yokom, do; Mary E. Yokom, do.; Margaret Seaney, do.; Daniel Whiteford, do.

The Board was constituted as follows:—Revs. R. Uro, W. C. Young, John Stewart, and Messrs. Carroll, Nairn, Ritchie, Sherlock, Watson, Cooper, McDonald, Johnston and Barr.

At the request of the members of the Board Mr. Ritchie has consented to retain his office as Secretary.

Fenians, Modern and Ancient.

No. 1.

(We put the amendment first, Parliamentary usage.)

To the Editor of the Huron Signal.

SIR,—It is with more than ordinary pleasure that I read your note relative to the call of John King, J. P., Ashfield, at your office last week, and I can appreciate his motive in so calling on you. And furthermore say from my long residence and familiarity with the denizens of both Ashfield and Wawanosh, willingly endorse Mr. King's statement, viz: that in my real opinion, from the knowledge of the settlements, that no Fenian or Treasonable organization exists in either Township.

But from the recent disclosures that have too fully developed themselves in Toronto on the fifth of November last, and following that—the dastardly and *dirty* abuse of the Nassau Hall; I am constrained to believe that in our Western Metropolis there is an organized party that portends no good to Canadians, or to orangeism in particular. From a knowledge of these facts, many well meaning protestants in this neighborhood have to a certain extent become panic stricken, and as a natural consequence are arming, and have been keeping look out parties during the last week. It is to be hoped that the enjoyments of the Christmas and New Years festivals will, dissipate (what I call) their groundless fears. Every day I receive fresh assurances from the oldest and most intelligent settlers that Fenianism is a myth in the neighborhood. My fearful friends are not altogether to blame, especially if they believe what many assert, that Fenianism of the present age are no better than in 1216; a memory, that I trust every well meaning man, Catholic or Protestant, would willingly forget.

DRUM MAJOR.

Dangannon, Dec. 26th, 1864.

DEATH OF AN OLD SETTLER.

Death, unrelenting in his exactions, has called away another Christian veteran, Wm. Jowett. The subject of our memoir was a native of Yorkshire, England, and for some time a merchant in London, from which place he emigrated to this county and settled in the Goderich township when it was thinly settled: It must have been pleasing to Mr. J. to mark the progress of the country during its settlement. He was a most consistent member of the Church of England; for many years an active Church warden, and one of its most liberal supporters. He has also held the position of School Trustee—which position he filled with honor. He lived to see all his family grown up and completely settled. He has gone to his rest at the good old age of 75.

It affords great pleasure to sketch (though briefly) the life of one of our oldest settlers, as it supplies us with an opportunity of exhibiting the character of an upright man and a sterling Christian. "Behold the upright man and do the just, for the end of that man is peace."

PERSONAL.—At the recent meeting of the Counties Council the Warden presented a very friendly and affectionate letter, addressed from Liverpool by F. Knell, Esq., late Reeve of Hay, to his old friends of the Council. The letter was intended for the June meeting, but did not arrive in time. Mr. Knell will be glad to hear that his many friends still regard him with feelings of the kindliest nature.

ROBBERY.

On Friday night last, some person or persons, at present unknown, broke into the shoe shop of Mr Francis Cassidy, of this town, and removed a number of pairs of boots and shoes. Is it not somewhat remarkable that the thieves of late seem to confine themselves to this line of business? Can it be merely for their own wearing?

A FENIAN STORY.—During the intense Fenian excitement a few days ago, the settlers of one of the new townships of this county heard that a band of armed marauders were marching upon them from Wallace (of lamb notoriety). Whereupon the worthy farmers gathered their families into a neighbor's house, and held a council of war as to the most effective mode of defence. It was finally resolved to form the main body around the house for the night, and throw out pickets in every direction. Any scout observing the enemy's approach was to fire his gun, which was the signal for a general rally to the threatened point. Hour after hour slipped away quietly, until about midnight, when a scout saw a fox prowling near him. The sporting instinct was so strong in the good fellow that he couldn't resist a shot at Reynard. Naturally enough the brave little garrison thought they were in for it, and in a moment all was excitement—husbands took leave of their wives and children and marched off boldly to meet the Fenians. But the only Fenian visible was a *dead fox*, much to the relief of all concerned. That's the story just as 'twas told to us. Whether the guilty scout was court-martialed or not we cannot say.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS, GODERICH.—We regret very much that a multiplicity of pressing engagements prevented us from witnessing the examination of the Public Schools of this Town on Thursday and Friday, 22nd and 23rd inst. We look upon the educational interests of the town as being of the utmost importance, and it is our sincere desire at all times to encourage as far as possible those whose duty it is to cultivate and train the infant mind. Those who did attend report a marked progress in all the branches taught, a sufficient evidence that the teachers have been endeavoring to discharge their duties faithfully during the past term. The Ward Schools, we believe, have turned out very successfully.

The examination exercises in the way of singing, dialogues, &c., were unusually interesting.

CHRISTMAS AND THE ST. GEORGE'S SOCIETY.—It gives us sincere pleasure to be able to record the fact that the St. George's Society, of this town, furnished a good substantial Christmas dinner for twenty-five families, who, no doubt, partook of the cheer in a spirit of thankfulness towards those whose kindness had prompted the act. James Watson, Esq., our present Mayor, supplemented the efforts of the Society by a timely and generous gift of ten cords of firewood. Being based upon philanthropical principles, the Society should have the sympathy of all good men in its "labours of love."

FENIANISM DENOUNCED.—We are given to understand that in the course of his service on the morning of Christmas day, Rev. P. Schneider, pastor of the Catholic congregation of this town, took high ground against Fenianism. He told his hearers that secret organizations of any kind were directly opposed to the teachings of his Church, and warned them to avoid even the appearance of evil in this respect. In our opinion the advice was the most judicious that could have been given under the circumstances, and we trust it will be rigidly adhered to.

ALLEGED ROBBERY.—Mr W. J. Johnston, a dealer in fancy articles in this town, avers that on Monday last, while peddling his wares in Kinloss, he fell amongst a lot of scoundrels at a certain tavern, who charged him with being a Fenian, Yankee sympathiser, &c., and on the strength of it robbed him of $80.00, and he could barely get off by paying the magistrate before whom he was brought $1.00. The parties, magistrate and all, were on the spree it is said. If Johnston's story can be sustained, the guilty parties should be brought to justice.

MILITIA.

The balloting has been conducted with despatch here at all events, for the three battalions are nearly full, owing to the close application given to the work by the Warden, Sheriff, and Clerk of the Peace. To draft nearly three battalions in two days is as much as any County can tell us of, we think. The Judge and Warden attended the ballot in pursuance of the summons of the Sheriff.—Many were anxious to be balloted. They are not ordered for active service as yet, but certainly ought to be officered and drilled without delay.

☞ Mr. John McLay, in a letter to the Bruce *Herald*, says he has instituted an action for libel against the publisher of the Mount Forest *Examiner*, that journal having published an anonymous communication calculated to injure Mr. McLay in the estimation of the public as well as of the Government. To belie a public officer through the press is one of the most reprehensible acts conceivable.

European News.

PORTLAND, Dec. 28, 1864.—The steam ship Peruvian, Capt. Ballantyne, from Liverpool 15th, Londonderry 16th, and Cape Race on the evening of the 24th, arrived up at 7 o'clock this evening. Purser Brown, reported that the ship Montreal arrived in the Clyde on the 18th. Alluding to the Florida disaster the London Times says, assuming it to have been by design, it is not disposed to waste much indignation upon the subject as the method of procuring and equipping the Florida, was such a violation of neutrality as to deprive the sufferers of sympathy. Brazil is really the outraged party. The Times predicts that Mr. Seward will make ample apology. A blockade running case has been on trial in the Court of Exchequer, in which the judge pointed out that all parties in the matter were foreigners and denounced such violations of the rights of asylum. A large open air meeting of the operatives of Manchester adopted resolutions strongly opposing the recognition of the slave holding Confederacy. Parliament meets on the 1st of February. Napoleon was much grieved at the death of Mosquard. Marshal Vaillant attended the funeral and made an oration expressing the great regret of the Emperor. Senator N. Lorento has resigned the Spanish Ministry of foreign affairs. Senator Benardes is his successor. The Italian capital will be transferred to Florence next May. The breach between the Papal government and Prussian minister at Rome is widening. The Times of the 16th in its city article says:—"The reduction in the bank rate to 7 per cent is a step entirely in harmony with the state of the market and will be especially welcomed from its being calculated to lessen morbid despondency

The Abortive Attack on Wilmington.

SHIPS vs. FORTS.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 29.—The Secretary of the Navy received the following this afternoon by special messenger:—

North Atlantic Squadron,
U.S. Flag-ship *Malvern*,
At sea off New Inlet, Dec. 26.

SIR,—I was in hopes that I should have been able to present to the nation Fort Fisher and the surrounding works as a Christmas offering, but I am sorry to say it has not been taken yet. I attacked it on the 22nd with the *Ironsides, Mackeponx, Monadnoc, Minnesota, Colorado, Mohican, Tuscarora, Wabash, Susquehanna, Brooklyn, Pocahontas, Juniata, Seneca, Shenandoah, Patuxet, Ticonderoga, Mackinaw, Maumee, Yantic, Kansas, Iosco, Quaker City, Monticello, Rhode Island Sassacus, Chippewa, Osceola, Tacony, Pontoosac, Santiago de Cuba, Fort Jackson*, and *Vanderbilt*, having a reserve of small vessels, consisting of the *Aries, Howquah, Wilderness, Cherokee, Advance, Anemone, Acorn, Gettysburg, Alabama, Keystone State, Banshee, Emma, Lillian, Tristram Shandy, Britannia, Gov. Buckingham*, and *Nansemond*. Previous to making the attack a torpedo on a large scale, with an amount of powder on board supposed to be sufficient to explode the powder magazine of the Fort, was prepared with great care and placed under the command of A. C. Rhind, who had associated with him in his perilous service L. T. W. Preston, 2nd Assistant Engineer, A. T. Mullen, of the United States steamer *Aquanna*, acting Master's Mate, Paul Bayard, and seven men.

So much has been said and written about the terrible effect of gunpowder in an explosion that happened lately in England, that great results were expected from this novel mode of making war. Everything that ingenuity could devise was adopted to make the experiment a success. The vessel was brought round from Norfolk, with great care and without accident, in tow of the United States steamer *Sassacus*, Commander J. L. Davis, who directed his whole attention to the matter in hand; and though he experienced some bad weather and lost one of her rudders, he took her safely into Beaufort, where he filled her up with powder and perfected all the machinery for blowing her up.

Gen. Butler had arrived at the rendezvous before us, and I hastened matters all that I could, so that no unnecessary delay might be laid to my charge. On the 19th I sailed from Beaufort, with all the monitors, the new *Ironsides* and the small vessels, including the *Louisiana*, disguised as a blockade runner, for the rendezvous 20 miles east of New Inlet, N.C., and found all the larger vessels and transports assembled there, the wind blowing light from the north east. On the 20th a heavy gale set in from the south-west, and not being able to make a port without scattering all the vessels, I determined to ride that out, which I did without accident of any kind, except the loss of a few anchors. The monitors all behaved beautifully. Only two vessels went to sea in order to avoid the gale, and suffered no worse than those at anchor. The transports being short of water put into Beaufort, and were not suitable for riding out at anchor in such heavy weather. After the south-wester the wind chopped round to the westward, and gave us a beautiful spell of weather which I could not afford to lose; and the transports with the troops, not making their appearance, I determined to take advantage of it and attack Fort Fisher and its outworks. On the 23rd, I directed Commander Rhind to proceed and explode the vessel right under the walls of Fort Fisher.

Mr. Bradford, of the coast survey, having gone at night and ascertained that we could place a vessel of several feet draft right on the edge of the beach, Lt. H. R. Samson, commanding the Gettysburg, volunteered to go in the Wilderness, Acting-master Henry Arey in command, and tow off the Louisiana into position. At 10:20 p. m., the powder vessel started in towards the Bar, and was towed by the Wilderness until the embrasures of Fort Fisher were plainly in sight. The Wilderness then cast off, and the Louisiana proceeded under steam until within 200 yards of the beach and about 500 from the Fort.

Commander Rhind anchored her securely there, and coolly went to work to make all his arrangements to blow her up. This he was enabled to do owing to a blockade runner going in right ahead of him.

The gallant party after coolly making all their arrangements for the explosion left the vessel, the last thing they did being to set her on fire under the cabin and then taking to their boats.

They made their escape off to the Wilderness, lying close by. The Wilderness then put off shore with good speed to avoid any ill effect that might happen from the explosion.

At 45 minutes past one, on the morning of the 24th, the explosion took place, and the shock was nothing like so severe as was expected. It shook the vessel some.

At daylight of the 24th, the fleet got under weigh and stood in line of battle. At 11:30 a.m., the signal was made to engage the forts, the Ironsides leading. The Ironsides took her position in the most beautiful and seamanlike manner, and opened a deliberate fire on the fort, which was firing at her with all its guns, which did not seem numerous in the north east face, though we counted what appeared to us to be seventeen guns. The Minnesota then took her position in handsome style, and her guns, after getting the range were fired with rapidity; while the Mohican, Colorado, and the large vessels marked on the plan, got to their stations all firing to cover themselves whilst anchoring. By the time the last of the large vessels anchored and got their batteries into play, but one or two guns of the enemy were fired, this *feu d enfer* driving them all to the bomb proofs.

Butler came in his flag-ship, with a few transports, the rest not having arrived from Beaufort. Being too late to do anything more, I signalled to the fleet to retire for the night to a safe anchorage, which they did without being molested by the enemy.

There were some mistakes made the day when the vessels went in to take position; my plan of battle being, based on accurate calculations and made from information to be relied on, was placed in the hands of each commander, and it seemed impossible to go astray if it was strictly followed. I required those vessels that had not followed it closely to get under weigh and assume their proper positions, which was done promptly and without confusion.

The vessels were placed somewhat nearer to the works, and were able to throw on their shell, which were before falling in the water.

One or two leading vessels having made the mistake of anchoring too far off, caused those coming after them to commit a like error; but when they all got into place and commenced work in earnest, the shower of shell—115 per minute—was irresistible. So quickly were the enemy's guns silenced that not an officer or man was injured. I regret, however, to have to report severe casualties by the bursting of a 100 pounder Parrott cannon. One burst on board the Ticonderoga, killing six of the crew and wounding seven others. Another burst on board the Yantec, killing one officer and two men.

In one hour and fifteen minutes after the first shot was fired not a shot came from the Fort. Two magazines had been blown up by our shells, and the Fort set on fire in several places, and such a torrent of missiles were falling into and bursting over it that it was impossible for anything human to stand it. Finding that the batteries were silenced completely, I directed the ships to keep up a moderate fire, in the hope of attracting the transports and bringing them in.

Our men were at work five hours and were glad to get a little rest. They came out of the action with rather a contempt for the rebel batteries, and anxious to renew the battle in the morning. On the 25th all the transports had arrived, and General Butler sent Gen. Weitzel to see me and arrange the programme for the day. It was decided that we should attack the fort again, while the army landed and assaulted them, if possible, under our heavy fire. At 7, a. m., on the 25th, I made signals to get under weigh and form a line of battle which was quickly done. The order to attack was given, and the Ironsides took position in her usual handsome style, all the vessels following according to orders. The firing this day was slow, only sufficient to amuse the enemy while the army landed, which they were doing five miles to the east of the fleet. I suppose about 3,000 men landed; when I was notified they were re-embarking. I could see our soldiers near the fort reconnoitring and sharpshooting, and I was in hopes that an assault was deemed practicable. General Weitzel was making observations about 600 yards off, and the troops were in and around the works. One gallant officer went on the parapet and brought away the rebel flag we had knocked down.

A soldier went into the works and led out a horse, and killing the orderly, mounted him taking his despatches from the body.

As the ammunition gave out the vessels retired from action, and the iron-clads and the Minnesota, Colorado, and Susquehanna were ordered to open rapidly, which they did, and with such effect that it seemed to tear the work to pieces. We drew off at sunset, leaving nine iron clads to fire through the night, expecting the troops would attack in the morning, when we would commence again.

I received word from Gen. Weitzel informing me that it was impracticable to assault, and herewith enclose a letter from Gen. Butler assigning his reasons for withdrawing the troops.

I don't pretend to put my opinion in opposition to Gen. Weitzel, who is a thorough soldier and an able engineer, and whose business it is to know more of assaulting than I do, but I cannot help thinking that it was worth while to make the attempt after coming so far.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
DAVID D. PORTER,
Rear-Admiral.

To Hon. G. Welles, Secretary of the Navy.
Washington, D. C.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF VA. & N.C.
Dec. 25, 1864.

ADMIRAL,—Upon landing the troops and making a thorough reconnoissance of Fort Fisher, both Gen Weitzel and myself are fully of the opinion that the place could not be carried by assault, as it was left substantially uninjured as a defensive work by the naval fire.

We found 17 guns protected by traverses, two only of which were dismounted, bearing up the beach and covering a strip of land, the only practicable route, not wide enough for a thousand men in line of battle.

Finding that nothing but the operations of a regular siege, which did not come within my instructions, could reduce the fort, and in view of the threatening aspect of the weather—the wind arising from the south-east rendering it impossible to make further landing through the surf—I caused the troops, with their prisoners, to re-embark, and I see nothing further that can be done by the land forces. I shall, therefore, sail for Hampton Roads as soon as the transport fleet can be got in order.

My engineers and officers report Fort Fisher to me as substantially uninjured as a defensive work.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
BENJAMIN F. BUTLER,
Major General Commanding.

To Rear-Admiral Porter.

Married.

By the Rev B Whiting, in this Town, on the 21st Dec., 1864, Mr. Alex Johnston to Miss Martha Berry, both of Goderich.

At the residence of the bride's father, by the Rev B Whiting on the 2nd of Jan., 1865, Mr John Thompson to Miss Sarah A Moss, all of the Town of Goderich.

THE MARKETS.

GODERICH, Jan. 3, 1864.

Fall Wheat,	$0:80	(@	0.84
Spring do	0:71	(@	0:73
Oats,	0:00	(@	0:28
Barley	0:50	(@	0:55
Peas	0:00	(@	0:50
Pork	5:50	(@	6:00
Beef,	2:50	(@	3:00
Lambs	2:00	(@	0:00
Turkies, each	0:45	(@	0:50
Geese, do	025:	(@	0:00
Chickens, pair	0:20	(@	0:00
Ducks, do	0:00	(@	0:25
Hides (green)	3:00	(@	0:00
Butter	0:00	(@	0:15
Potatoes	0:30:	(@	0.35
Wood	2:00	(@	0:00
Eggs	0:08	(@	0:10
Apples	0:40	(@	0:50
Hay, ⅌ ton	10:00	(@	13:00
Straw, per load	2:50	(@	3:00

New