Huron Signal.

WEEKLY EDITION.

W. T. COX, Editor and Proprietor.] The Greatest Possible Good to the Greatest Possible Number."

$1.50 PER ANN. IN ADVANCE] GODERICH, C. W., THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 1864. [VOL. XVII.—NO. 20

The Thirty Monks
OR
THE ORDER OF THE AVENGER.

The castle of Hohenfels was built upon one of the loftiest heights on the Rhine. Rising with a lofty sweep from among the lesser hills around, the huge rock swept onward until it reached the river, where it plunged downward in a tremendous precipice. Nearly eight hundred feet above the river the stately walls of the castle rose, with all its pomp of towers, and turrets, and bulwarks; by day spreading forth its flaunting banners to the breeze, and by night upraising its watch fires that blazed like meteors against the sky.—The road from Germany to France passed within a few miles of the castle, and all travellers were compelled to cross the river within sight of it. The tolls which were levied upon these people were enormous, and happy was the man who could escape with the sacrifice of half of his baggage.

One day a company of monks descended from the opposite side of the river towards the place of crossing. There were about thirty of them, and the thick layers of dust that covered them from head to foot showed that they had come upon a long journey.—They were enveloped in robes of black cloth, which hung about them in ample folds; their faces were completely covered, so that their eyes only were visible; and the heavy cowls that hung over their heads seemed to conceal them still more effectually. They entered one by one into the barge, and took their seats in silence.

The ferryman, like all of his class, was extremely loquacious, and anxious both to tell and hear the news. So, after many efforts, he ventured to address the monk who appeared to be chief among his passengers. The monk was a man of remarkable stature, with a straight figure and Atlantean shoulders.

'You have been upon a long journey, holy father,' said the ferryman.

'Yes,' said the monk, in a voice of great richness and depth.

'It must be on some important business,' continued the ferryman.

'It concerns life and death,' replied the monk, turning away with a gesture that forbade further questioning.

But the ferryman was not daunted, and he asked, 'Whither may you be going, reverend father? Is it to France?—or perhaps, to Italy?'

The chief monk stretched out his hand and pointed silently towards the Castle of Hohenfels, upon which were now gathering the shades of twilight, and from whence the light of the kindling watch fires streamed out in long lines of radiance.

'Ah, that is a noble castle!' said the ferryman. 'There is none like it on the Rhine. But, methinks, it is a strange thing, for you to go there. Many of your order stay away as far as possible.'

'Ah!' said the monk, with some interest. 'It was not so in the days of Count Hugo,' continued the ferryman; 'but since Count Franz has held it, there has never been so much as the footprint of a priest or a monk inside its gates.'

'Why would they not go in?' inquired the monk.

'Because they have been plundered or scourged outside,' replied the ferryman.

'Why does this Count Franz treat inoffensive monks so cruelly?'

'He treats all, harshly,' said the ferryman. 'It was only yesterday that a party of merchants were stripped of everything. The reason why he hates monks and priests, I suppose, is because they trouble his conscience.'

'And was it not always thus?' asked the monk.

'Ah no,' was the reply. 'The Count Hugo was a just and virtuous man. He never took more than his due. In his day I kept my barge crossing all day long; but now it is only at times that passengers come here.'

'What became of Count Hugo was the monk's next question.

'He went to fight for the Holy Sepulchre, and died there,' replied the ferryman. 'Count Franz, his cousin, heard the news of his death about a year after he left. He took possession of the castle at once. Count Hugo had a wife and a son; but since that day they have never been seen out of the castle.'

The monk slowly clenched his hands together, and said, in a strangely altered tone, 'Can you tell me, friend, what has become of them?'

'I know not,' was the reply; 'I only hear what people say. Some say they are dead—both of them. Some say that Count Franz killed them; others say that they are alive, but kept in a dungeon; others again say that the only son is confined, but that the lady is free. I hear almost everything.'

'Had Count Hugo no friends who could see justice done to his relatives?' inquired the monk.

'Most of his friends went away with him,' said the ferryman. 'Those who remained could do nothing. Who could enter there, and ask questions? Count Franz keeps to himself, and has no friends; all within Hohenfels is a mystery. It is seven years since Count Hugo left; and I think if his wife and child are not dead now they soon will be.'

The monk bowed his head low, and a half-stifled groan escaped him. His companions looked at one another in silence. The ferryman wondered, but said nothing. He passed the remainder of the time in silent conjectures as to the purpose of the monks, but was completely baffled. Soon, however, they reached the other side.

One by one the monks disembarked, in the same silent manner in which they had entered the boat. The chief monk stepped out at last. As he touched the shore he turned round, and whispered to the ferryman. The man uttered a cry, and staggered back.

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Count Franz Von Hohenfels was in the reception hall of the castle. It was a large and richly-furnished apartment. Rugs and tapestries from the East, gold and silver vases, splendid arms and armor, ornaments of rare material and beautiful form, appeared on every side. All this had been the plunder which the count had obtained from passing travellers.

The count was pacing the hall. His armor was on, and he was arranging a plan for an attack upon a village not many miles away. The bustle of preparation for the expedition resounded throughout the castle. The count was a stout man, with strong and muscular frame. His helmet lay on the table by his side, so that his head and face were exposed to view. He had a thick neck, harsh and gross face, and fierce grey eyes, that seemed always influenced with passion. As he was walking a page entered the room. At his announcement the count started, and struck his clenched fist upon the table. 'Monks!' said he. 'Monks here!'

'Yes, my lord,' replied the page.

'The infernal drones!' cried the count.—'Take them down and throw them into the river.'

'But no,' he suddenly added, 'I have an idea. Let the scoundrels in—I have an idea. Let them in. There will be some use for them this night, I'll warrant them.

He resumed his walk up and down the hall, gesticulating and muttering to himself.—Presently the page reappeared, followed by the new comers. The thirty monks, dressed in their mysterious robes, entered, solemnly, one after another, and stood before the Count Franz.

'Who are you?' he said, rudely, 'and what do you want?'

'My lord,' said one of the monks, who stood nearest the chief, "we are humble friars, on a journey for a solemn purpose, and we wish to rest here for the night. We crave from your lordship food and shelter."

"Take them down to the courtyard," cried the count, "and let the knaves have some victuals. But remember," he added, sternly, "this is the first time and the last time that any of your order have passed by me without being scourged or thrown into the river.—Away, you dogs!—say your paternosters, and wait till I summon you."

The monks departed with the same solemn step, without a word, and descended into the courtyard, where some rude servants' fare was given to them. After about an hour an imperious message came from the count for them to reappear.

When they entered the room they saw a change. The large hall was filled with men-at-arms, who to the number of one hundred and twenty, were ranged in a line on each side of the apartment. At the head of room sat the count, and by his side a lady. She could not have been more than twenty-five years of age, and she was very lovely, but her face was as pale as death, and upon it there was an expression of hopeless woe that was painful to behold. The count motioned to the monks to approach, and they obeyed in their usual solemn manner.

"Who are ye?" he cried, sternly.

"The Brethren of the Order of the Avenger," replied the monk who had spoken before.

"The Avenger!" said the count. "That is a new name."

"On a right image——"

"Perhaps you have reached the end of it in entering the Castle von Hohenfels," interrupted the count, with a sneer.

"Perhaps we have," said the monk, with a strange emphasis.

"We shall see," said the count. "I sent for you to take part in a pleasant ceremony. This lady is about to become my wife, and one of you shall have the honor of performing the ceremony."

The lady started to her feet, and clasped her hands. The count fiercely ordered her to be quiet. She looked in despair at the monks, and cried—"Beware how you consent to be the tool of this monster! God will avenge me. I will die first."

"I tell you, proud woman, beware how you enrage me!" exclaimed the count.

"I will die first!" cried the lady. "You may kill me, but I will never be your wife!"

Meanwhile the monks at a sign from their chief had ranged themselves in a double line; each one stood facing the men-at-arms. The chief stood at the head, between the two lines, facing the count. He was strangely moved. His breast heaved, and his hands clenched each other tightly.

The count seized the lady roughly by the hand, and dragged her up to the chief monk. Still she resisted vehemently, with cries and shrieks, and passionate supplications to Heaven. Suddenly the count dropped her hand.

"I will soon reduce you to reason," he cried.

He rushed from the room, but soon returned, leading by the hand a boy, about ten years of age. He was pale and thin, and a weary look of suffering rested upon his emaciated features.

"Now, proud woman, disobey me if you dare!" cried the count, with the malignant expression of a fiend. "If you refuse my wish, this boy dies this instant. Consent, and he shall live. Your stubborness has kept him in prison for six years; and if you still hold out, you will doom him to death."

The lady gave a long, loud shriek, and fell to the floor.

"Wretch!" cried a voice of thunder.

In a moment the child was snatched from the count, who was hurled to the floor by a tremendous blow from the hand of the chief monk, who towered over him like a giant. He staggered to his feet.

"Charge!" he shouted to the man-at-arms; "charge upon them! Cut them to pieces!" and, drawing his sword, he sprang upon his assailant.

In one moment the whole scene had been changed. At the cry from their leader every monk had thrown off his huge robe, and now, instead of the humble friars, there appeared thirty stalwart knights, clothed in impenetrable armor, and brandishing their swords.—The chief monk towered above them all, and his eyes shot flashes of fire through the opening of his vizor, as he faced the astonished count.

But there was no delay. A moment more, and the knights, without waiting for an attack, sprung upon the men-at-arms. The latter had an overwhelming superiority of numbers, but they were individually as nothing, compared with the well-armed knights, who were masters of every military art, and whose well-aimed strokes told with terrible effect. The contest became a slaughter. The knights fought as though it were sport, and their foes were as children before them.

The count, after a short interval of rage and surprise, had thrown himself upon his enemy. But the struggle was over in a few seconds. Three strokes had scarcely been given before his sword was violently struck from his grasp, and, whirling through the air, it fell with a clang upon the pavement. Then the knight rushed upon him and, seizing him, hurled him to the floor. He now seized the cord which had lately bound his monkish attire, and with this he firmly bound the prostrate count.

The struggle had been brief and sanguinary. More than fifty of the men-at-arms lay upon the floor. The others, panic-stricken, and furiously pressed by the knights, fled by every door from the apartment. But now, the loud voice of the chief knight, summoned them back; and the knights, shouting their swords, repeated the cry, promising them quarter. One by one the men returned, and, at a command from their conquerors, laid down their arms, and ranged themselves around the room. The fallen count looked on in amazement and terror.

The lady had recovered from her faintness at the first shock of the contest, and grasping her son, fled into a corner, in which she knelt, covering and shielding her beloved boy with her own body. But ever and anon she turned with a strange look of enquiry, and at each sound of the chief knight's voice her expression became more and more intensified.

And now the chief knight advanced towards her. Leading her gently forward, he slowly unfastened his helmet. The lady looked eagerly and tremblingly, with all her soul centred in the gaze. But as his helmet was unbound, and disclosed to view a magnificent head with noble features, the lady sprang forward into his arms with a low moan, that seemed like the outburst of all the long restrained agony of years.

'Hugo, Hugo, my lord! Oh! is it you?'

She sank upon his breast, and he folded her in his arms, and bowed his head over her. At this scene a murmur ran around the hall; the murmur deepened into a cry, the cry into a shout; and, at length, loud acclamations arose—cheer upon cheer—hailing the wondrous return.

On hearing this, Count Franz looked up. Envy, hatred, wrath, malice, and every evil passion struggled for mastery within him; but fear was stronger than all. He looked around despairingly among his men-at-arms, but none of them recognized him now.

Count Hugo next turned to embrace his son. He held the boy tightly in his arms; and at the child's soft voice, which called him father, he was for a moment overcome.

Suddenly however he turned. The soft emotions of love and gratitude were associated with sterner thoughts. All that he had heard, all that he had witnessed, and all the proofs of suffering that he now saw in the dear faces of his wife and child, called aloud for vengeance. He pointed with a stern gesture to Count Franz, and called to the men-at-arms, 'Seize that wretch!'

The men-at-arms sprang forward, and Count Franz turned as pale as death.

'Hugo, Cousin Hugo, mercy, mercy!' he cried, in a scarce audible voice.

'Mercy!' said the other. 'Can I forget what I have just seen?'

'Oh, for the love of God,' exclaimed the count, 'by the sacred memory of Him for whose sepulchre you have fought so well——'

'Peace,' said Hugo. 'Do you not know, wretch, that all your words are worse than useless. Hear my sentence; and let all present judge whether I am right or wrong.

'Seven years ago I left my home to fight for our Blessed Master in the Holy Land. I left my wife and child with you, confiding in your faithful friendship. I have been to the Holy Land. I have fought and bled, and incurred a thousand perils. Three years ago I started to return, but I was imprisoned by the Infidels. After a captivity of more than two years, I escaped, along with these noble knights; yet, all this time, I felt confident that the Count Franz was faithful to me in all things.

'A month since I heard the truth from a merchant in Venice, who had passed this way and learned all. With my trusty friends, I hurried here. The news was confirmed at every step. At the last town at which we tarried we procured these disguises, and were able to enter here unsuspected.

'And now, wretch, hear my sentence! For every sorrow that you have caused these dear ones, you shall receive equal misery. Your sentence on my son shall be carried out upon yourself. You shall be taken hence to the dungeon where you confined him for so many years; and at the end of that time you shall be carried to the topmost turret and hurled into the river below. Away with him!—away with him!'

With screams and prayers, that were unheeded, the count was carried away.

Count Hugo filled his castle with new and honest soldiers. He put a stop to the depredations that had been committed and the stream of travel that had been so long disturbed was poured on as before. His wife and child recovered health and happiness in the presence of the restored count, and peace and plenty reigned again within its walls. The knights who had accompanied him remained with him one month, and then departed, each to his own home. The sentence on Count Franz was carried out, as far as confinement was concerned; but at the end of six years he had become so utterly broken-spirited and abject, that Count Hugo let him go forth, on condition that he would go once for all out of another country. To this the wretched man agreed, and he was never heard of again.'

THE PARSNIP.—The parsnip is one of the most valuable roots that can be grown. In the Island of Jersey it is used almost exclusively for fattening both cattle and swine.—According to Le Couteur the weight of a good crop varies from thirteen to twenty-seven tons per acre. When parsnips are given to milch cows with a little hay, in the winter season, the butter is found to be as fine a colour and excellent flavour as when the animals are feeding in the best pastures. As parsnips contain six per cent more mucilage than carrots, the difference may be sufficient to account for the superior fattening as well as butter-making quality of the parsnip. In the fattening of cattle the parsnip is found superior to the carrot performing the business with more expedition and affording meat of exquisite and highly juicy flavor; the animals eat it with much greediness. The result of experiment has shown that not only in neat cattle, but in the fattening of hogs and poultry, the animals become fat much sooner, and are more healthy than when fed with any other root or vegetable, and that, beside, the meat is more sweet and delicious. The parsnip leaves being more bulky than those of carrots, may be mown off before taking the roots, and given to oxen, cows, or horses, by which they will be greedily eaten. Another thing in favor of parsnips for this country, is that the frost does not injure them. They may remain in the ground until spring, when they make splendid feed, at a time every other kind of root or green thing is scarce, or they may be slightly buried, where they can be obtained almost any time during the winter. On account of their rapid growth when young, the weeding is less trouble than weeding carrots.—[Colonial Farmer.

INFLUENCE OF FLOWERS.—During the raid of Quantrell in Kansas, and the sacking and ravaging of Lawrence, the gang came to the residence of George Ford, whose neat house was surrounded with flowers. The soldiers appealed to their leader to spare the place, "as it was too pretty to burn;" he assented, and the house was spared, almost the only building left. Mr. Ford says now he shall cultivate flowers as long as he remembers the rebellion. The charm of a few flowers touched the heart of men whom no misery or suffering, in the midst of which they were revelling, could reach, and, saved from destruction the house referred to.—Who does not love flowers, and who will not devote even a little space to them? They refine, they elevate.

TROUBLE ON JOHNSON'S ISLAND.—The Cleveland *Leader* has information that a plot of the rebel prisoners confined on Johnson's Island, to escape, was discovered on Sunday. It seems that a plank in one of the cook-houses in the middle of one of the barracks had been removed, and that a tunnel had been excavated with an outlet beyond the prison yard. In this hole, which was large enough to admit the passage of one man, were found three ladders, roughly constructed, three knives notched into saws, a lot of bed-ticking from beds, tarred so as to be water-proof, a revolver, a dark lantern, made out of a fruit can, with a hole and slide in one end, and three life-preservers made of tightly-corked canteens, four to each life-preserver, fastened to a canvas belt. The scheme was discovered through one of the prisoners. His brother rebs were fearfully exasperated, and made an ineffectual attempt to hang him.

MOWING OFF STRAWBERRY VINES.—At a late meeting of the Waltham (Mass.) "Farmers' Club," Dr. O. D. Farnsworth said he had been trying a new experiment with his strawberry beds. After his bed had ceased bearing, he mowed it closely, and raked off all the vines, put on a little guano, and the result was that the ground was literally covered with the finest fruit. The bed which he experimented with is now five years old, and he intends to continue this course with it. He thought it would not be well to pursue this course if there were many weeds, as in that case it would be easier to set out a new bed. In setting a bed, he would trench 1½ feet deep and manure highly. The rows should be 3½ feet apart, and the plants 8 inches apart in the rows. Paths should be dug from 18 inches to two feet apart, and filled with meadow hay.

Buffalo & Lake Huron Railroad

TIME TABLE.

SUMMER ARRANGEMENT.

GOING EAST.		Mail.	Accom.
GODERICH,	DEP.	7.45 A.M.	5.00 P.M.
CLINTON		8.24	5.55
HARPURHEY		8.46	6 15
SEAFORTH		8.52	6.21
CARRONBROOK		9.09	6.43
MITCHELL		9.25	7 00
STRATFORD	ARR.	10.05	7.45
GOING WEST.		Accom.	Mail.
STRATFORD	DEP.	8.10 A.M.	4.00 P.M.
MITCHELL		8.50	4.43
CARRONBROOK		9.12	5.01
SEAFORTH		9.32	5.20
HARPURHEY		9.38	5.27
CLINTON		9.58	5.50
GODERICH	ARR.	10.40	6.30

Going East connects with Grand Trunk & Great Western.

Going West connects at Goderich on Tuesdays and Fridays with str Huron for Saginaw, and on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday with str Canadian for Southampton and intermediate ports. White's stages daily for Lucknow, &c.

Huron Signal.

GODERICH, C. W., JUNE 10, 1864.

THE "STRONG" MINISTRY.

Nothing can be clearer than the fact that if the Government—the "strong" Government—does not succeed in bringing the Session to a speedy close it will be deprived of the control of the House. Defeated in the Upper House on the Bruce County Town amendment, defeated on the Essex Election motion, and now again defeated by a majority of two on Tuesday on Mr. McDougall's amendment in the same case, it shows symptoms of a speedy break down. After all the factiousness of the men now in power, while on the opposition benches, the country finds that the only good bills of the session are those which originated with and would have been carried out by the Liberal party, the members of which have been manly enough to assent to acts of their own paternity, although adopted by a different "set."—It is extremely doubtful whether the Cartier-Macdonald men under similar circumstances would have been equally consistent. And yet the Ministerial press complains of the *factiousness* of the opposition, as if their masters, after having displayed a most *indecent* spirit of faction previous to their accession to power, are to be placed above all criticism, when on the treasury benches.

We should like very much to know John A's ideas with reference to the only course open to a Ministry when it finds itself unable to carry on the Government of the country with a strong hand. He was kind enough to state that it was honorable and praiseworthy for the late Ministers to resign when they felt themselves too weak to proceed with satisfaction to themselves or the country. What view does the hon. gentleman take of the matter after being placed in a minority of *six* on Mr. Scatcherd's amendment to the motion on Sheriff McEwan's case on Monday night, and suffering another defeat on the same case on Tuesday night? Will he resign?—Will he frankly admit the weakness of the Ministry and hand over the reins of power to men who *can* form a stronger Government? We think, judging from the past, that nothing of the kind will be done until the very last. Meanwhile, the "crisis" looms up rapidly.

THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY.

THE Great Wheel which, in its revolutions, turns up the important events of this world, brings to the surface much curious material. But never, in our opinion, did it perform a more startling freak than when it elevated Mr. Abraham Lincoln, the Western rail-splitter and lawyer, to the Presidency of the United States. Nowhere, outside of a Republic, could such a man have raised himself to a position of so much importance. He was unknown, comparatively speaking, to the political world, up to the date of his nomination, he was not an orator of mark, neither was he a man of literature. To statesmanship and the relations held by the great nations of the world towards each other he was an utter stranger, and had it not been for the very peculiar combinations which resulted in his election he would, doubtless, have gone on splitting rails and jokes, or practicing law in a small way to the end of his days. Mr. Lincoln has force of character, but it is not of that sort which in the old world has so frequently raised men from the humblest positions to rule over great nations. Indeed, as we picture the President, straitened and hemmed in by the extraordinary position into which he has been thrust,—tied up in red tape—twisted about by ambitious or unscrupulous politicians—feeling that his awkward attempts at Government are secretly laughed at by the representatives of Foreign Powers, we have often fancied that he would fain forego the honors attaching to his office and leave the White House at the earliest opportunity never to return again. Who can say whether such is not really the case?

The great Civil War has very naturally diverted the attention of the nation, to a considerable extent, from the approaching Presidential Election. However, it seems to have been, until very recently, a foregone conclusion that Mr. Lincoln must be returned and kept in office until the "Rebellion" is put down. But now many of the Republican leaders change their tune. Mr. Lincoln has been a tool in their hands, yet not so pliant a tool as they could wish. Contrary to his own convictions of what was right, he issued a Proclamation of Emancipation, and was lauded to the skies by the left wing of the Abolition party. Contrary to his own convictions he was "craked" at by journalists until he actually came to believe that the "rebels" could not offer serious opposition to a hasty, mad, "On to Richmond," hence the dismissal of cautious McClellan, and his host of followers in command, and hence the torrents of human blood which have been spilled upon the soil of Virginia. All this and much more Mr. Lincoln has done, and yet there are evidences of alienation on the part of those who placed executive authority in his hands, because his edicts and encroachments upon the old Constitution have not been *more* sweeping—because of a certain amount of native bluntness which renders him, to a limited extent, unsubservient. The New York *Tribune*, which prayed "God bless Abraham Lincoln," showed a disposition some time ago to join in the movement to bring out an opposition candidate, and there can be no manner of doubt that if a few of the Republican leaders could unite against him, Abraham Lincoln, his policy, his presence, and his jokes, would, ere a year rolls around, be heard of no more except in history. The course of the Baltimore Convention, however, which has nominated Mr. Lincoln, will do much towards culisting the active sympathies of the Radical Republicans, although it is certain that if Gen. Fremont persists, as he seems determined to do, there will be a serious split in the party. The Democratic Convention will be held in Chicago on the 4th of July, and it is probable that Geo. B. McClellan will be the unanimous choice. Twould be singular, indeed, if a division of parties, similar to that which secured the election of Mr. Lincoln, should be the means of sending in "little Mac." Stranger things have happened in connection with American politics.

Mr. John A. Macdonald on Ministerial Majorities.

(From the Montreal Herald.)

We give below two opinions of the Hon. J. A. Macdonald, expressed within a very brief period, respecting the propriety of weak Administrations retaining office.—One is from the report of the Kingston *Daily News* of April 12, 1864, of the nomination for that city, and the other from the report of the proceedings in the House of Assembly last Tuesday night, when the vote was taken on Mr. Dorion's motion of non-confidence, and the Government of which Mr. John A. Macdonald is leader was found to have only two of a majority:—

MR. JOHN A. MACDONALD AT THE LATE NOMINATION FOR KINGSTON.

"Without a vote or a defeat, they (the late Ministry) resigned, and he would say they had no just reason for holding on to the Government if they were not strong enough, or considered themselves not strong enough. *No having the confidence of sufficient members of the House, they would be degrading themselves if they clinged to office.* He would say distinctly the Ministry acted a very honorable part. He must say they behaved well in the matter. *And, gentlemen,* said Mr. Macdonald, *"their successors will not remain in power unless they have a strong majority.* and the Ministry, "when they went back to the House, would find that they had a working majority. (Cheers.) The electors need not fear that he or his colleagues would soon appear here again asking for their support."

JOHN A. MACDONALD IN THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, MAY 17TH.

"Mr. John A. Macdonald intimated that the Government would do what another Government had done, who, beginning with a majority of two on a vote of non-confidence, had held on through the session, and opened another session, with no greater majority.—The Government would follow that course and go on."

The Truth Leaking Out.

Gen Grant states that during the terrible fighting of last week, his losses were 7,500 men. This indicates that Lee's army is still very formidable; if it were not, no such loss could be inflicted upon the Federal arms outside of intrenchments. A battle is not to decide this contest. It has pleased, and still continues to please the Washington authorities, to delude the people with false stories of victories from day to day; when the most favorable view that can be taken of the situation is, that a number of bloody, but indecisive engagements have taken place. The enemy has shown himself sufficiently strong to inflict disastrous blows upon our army in the open field. What are we to do when he sees fit to take position behind his fortifications? Our work must then be slow and toilsome, for the seige of Richmond is no holiday affair.—*Detroit Paper.*

THE AMERICAN WAR.

NOTHING DONE SINCE FRIDAY.

WHAT WAS DONE ON FRIDAY.

Confederates Claim to have beaten Grant at every point!

Federal Victory at Staunton!

Headquarters, Army of the Potomac, June 5.—The Confederates attacked the 2nd corps and a portion of the 6th corps last evening, but were handsomely repulsed, after a desperate struggle. They advanced to the attack several times, and each time their lines were cut to pieces in their attempt to reach our works. Their losses must have been fearful, for our men shot them down at a short range, while our batteries mowed them down in masses.

Our loss was very light. A shell exploded among the members of Hancock's staff, one of whom lost a leg.

Our men are busily engaged in digging towards the works of the enemy, and the attack last night was made on one of our working parties.

The railroad from the White House towards the front was in complete running order for a distance of four miles, and trains run hourly without interruption.

New York, June 8.

The *Times* special says of the rebel attack on Sunday night:—The rebels made an assault just after dark this evening in front of Smythe's brigade, 2nd corps. The whole lower strata of atmosphere was a dense mist. Under cover of this fog the enemy advanced in strong line of battle, and succeeded in reaching a point within pistol range of our works before they were discovered by the advanced pickets. No sooner did the outposts give the alarm than one sheets of fire belched forth from our ranks in front and on both flanks of the enemy. In about half an hour he fell back, leaving the ground covered with dead and wounded. Our loss was small.

The *Tribune's* Washington special says:—The steamer Connecticut arrived this morning having left White House yesterday afternoon at two o'clock. She had on board about 1,100 wounded, among whom were a few Confederates.

The *Herald's* correspondent says:—Our line now runs nearly parallel to the Chickahominy in its main direction, but is exceedingly irregular throughout its entire length. The right is formed by Burnside's corps, the right centre by Wright's corps and the left by Hancock. Warren's corps was moved last night from the old position on the right of the line to a new one on the rear of the centre as a reserve. The line is compact and impregnable.

Another correspondent says that a large number of reinforcements arrived on the evening of the 5th. Our reinforcements outnumber our losses, and more are coming.

Baltimore, June 8.

The Convention reassembled at 10 o'clock this morning. The hall was, if possible, more crowded than yesterday. After settling the question of admitting delegates from Missouri and Arkansas, Mr. Lincoln was nominated by acclamation.

Headquarters Army of the Potomac, June 7.—Richmond papers of June 5th are receiv'd. The *Sentinel* of the 5th anounces the arrival of 850 Yankee prisoners on Friday last, at Libby prison. It calls them an uncultivated and barbarous mass, &c. It says that on Friday, fourteen assaults were made by Grant's army on the right of their line held by Kershaw, Hoke and Breckenridge, all of which were repulsed with great slaughter of the assailants—their men escaping almost unharmed. It acknowledges that we gained a partial success against Breckenridge, but they subsequently recovered the ground lost. It says the Yankee loss was very heavy, and puts it at from 10,000 to 12,000 in this engagement. It also says that they took 1,000 prisoners. The *Sentinel* further says that Grant's object was to gain the strong positions around Gaines' mill, open the road to Bottom bridge and connect with Butler, but his object has been signally and disastrously defeated.

WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, June 8, 1:45, p. m.—To Major-Gen. Dix:—A despatch from Mr. Dana at General Grant's head quarters, dated last night 8:30 p. m., announces a victory by Gen. Hunter over the Confederates beyond Staunton, and that the Confederate General Jones was killed on the battle field. The despatch as follows:—

The Richmond 'Examiner' of to-day speaks of the defeat of Gen. W. E. Jones, by Gen. Jones, by General Hunter, twelve miles beyond Staunton, Va. General Jones was killed on the field; his successor retired to Waineboro, and now holds the Mountains between Charlottsville and Staunton. The paper further states that no hospitals or stores were captured by Gen. Hunter.

Another despatch announces that our forces occupy Staunton.

ATTACK ON FORT SUMTER.—Letters from the fleet and Morris Island, at Charleston, state that while the recent attack on Fort Sumter by the iron clads and batteries resulted in still further demolishing that fortress, the rebels responded with such power and accuracy that the Monitors Sangamon and Nantucket had their smoke stacks shot through, and had holes torn in their decks, compelling them to withdraw from the action. The rebels have evidently got some new ordnance, filled 3 inch guns or 200-pounders, and their firing was exceedingly accurate. They poured a storm of shot and shell around our batteries, but did no harm, not a man being hurt.

GENERAL BUTLER.—The *Army and Navy Journal* says:—"It is reported that an order has been issued removing still another prominent officer commanding a heavy column who has not fulfilled the great expectations his admirers entertained of him. The order has not been published, nor has it yet taken effect." We presume this points to General Butler.—*Boston Journal.*

New York city has appropriated a fresh half million dollars to provide additional aid to the families.

New Hampshire soldiers are the true grit. A letter from the army says that of the nine hundred men who came in with legs and arms bandaged, and when stopped and examined were found not to have so much as a "scratch" upon them, not one is known to have been a son of New Hampshire.

Mrs. George W. Harvey of Portland, Me., recently lost in one week her husband, father and brother. Her husband was captain in the 3rd Maine Regiment, and was mortally wounded in the recent battle, and while her brother, a soldier in the same regiment, was helping to carry him to the rear, he was also shot and instantly killed.

☞ The Stratford people are using a watering cart on their streets this year.

The Scenes of the Battles in Virginia.

The situation of both the opposing armies in Virginia is such, at the latest advices, that a battle may be considered imminent. In view of this fact a brief topographical description of the battle-field may not be uninteresting. Both armies are now in Hanover county, with the North Anna on the north and the Chickahominy on the south. Lee's army, as it is announced in official despatches from Gen. Grant, is on the Mechanicsville road south of the Totopotomoy river, one of the tributaries of the Pamunkey, and between that stream and Hawes' shop, with his right resting on Shady Grove.

The surface of Hanover county is hilly and the soil sandy, but there are few natural impediments to the operations of an army. Hanover Court House, the county seat, is memorable as the scene of Patrick Henry's early career, and as the birth-place of Henry Clay. The object of Lee will be to preserve the rebel capital from the advance of General Grant and for this reason he has selected a field which covers all the highways leading into Richmond. General Grant seems inclined to give his enemy no opportunity to move northward, and therefore has ordered the destruction of bridges over the Little and North Anna rivers.

Lee's left—assuming that he faces to the north—is protected by the Chickahominy. The road from Hanovertown crosses the stream at Mechanicsville, which is on a turnpike five miles northwest of Richmond. There is another road just in the rear of this which also leads to the rebel capital. In moving down these roads General Grant will encounter the lines of Lee's army, and the situation is so contracted that there is little probability of another flank movement being successful. If the Chickahominy is intended by Lee as the last line of defense, the position has been well chosen. The stream itself is peculiarly adapted to the defensive warfare. The river is a small one, and flows sluggishly. It divides itself into half dozen streamlets, running into and out of each other at random. These water courses occupy a space of about seventy yards in width. Immense trees grow up out of the water, and the entire stream is covered by a thick wood. It is a remarkable instance of a river running through and watering a long strip of woods. From each side of this woodland, a flat surface extends for about half a mile. This is nearly always overflowed, and becomes an impassable morass. It is only when the water in the river is very low that men can safely walk upon the ground bordering it. On these flat surfaces there is not a solitary tree. They are bare, and anything moving upon them can easily be discerned. From the borders of those plains, huge hills, in some cases two and three hundred feet high, abruptly rise. They are covered with thick woods, and are so steep that waggons cannot be hauled directly up their face. The few roads go down them diagonally to the bridges, across the swamp and river. This Chickahominy valley, one of the strongest in America, is the outer defense of Richmond. From the tops of the hills on the one side, across the swamp to the hill tops on the other side, the distance varies from a mile to a mile and a half. The ordnary twelve-pounder rifled Napoleon gun can just about throw a shell from one hill-top to the other. From the Fredericksburg railroad crossing down to Newbridge, a distance of eight miles, the Confederate works are all along the hills on its southern border.

HARD FIGHTING.—The New York *Herald's* correspondent says:—"The wounded of the 5th Corps sum up over 800 in one day's fight. The 9th Massachusetts, which left Culpepper Court House with 600 muskets, has but 93 men. The 2nd Vermont, which had 530 muskets, has now but 130 left. The 4th Michigan, which had 277 at the first fight, now numbers only 17."

Great Storm in Connecticut.

HAIL-STONES SEVEN AND A QUARTER INCHES IN CIRCUMFERENCE.

The Hartford *Times* contains the following: On Wednesday afternoon, June 1, the intense heat—90 degrees—was rapidly succeeded by dense clouds from the West, and every indication of a thunder storm. The clouds broke in passing over Hartford, the heaviest portion passing by to the North and East, and the other mass on the South. The separation was accompanied by a furious gale of wind. But to the North and East of the city it was not all wind; there was hail—and such hail, too, as we rarely see. It came down in masses, covering the ground in some places to the depth of several inches. Deeper drifts of the hail were piled up in particular spots, the size of the hail stones being extraordinary.

In East Windsor and the towns adjoining they are described as ranging from the size of a walnut to that of a butternut. The destruction of garden vegetables and grain was somewhat serious, but cannot now be estimated. Fortunately the tobacco crop is not yet sufficiently advanced to receive such injury as it would have sustained had the storm happened two or three weeks later, the destruction of the first shoots not involving the ruin of the plant. Grass, fruit-trees, &c., were injured greatly in some localities. Glass was extensively broken. Windows suffered all along the path of the storm for miles.

In Rockville the loss in this description of property was serious. The immense mills of the cotton factories presented a large exposed surface, and the "American" suffered more than all the others, as it extended North and South. The loss of glass in this mill alone is $300. The Rock, New England, and other mills also had windows broken, as did some private residences. The extent of the storm is not yet known, and only a rough guess can be made as to the amount of injury inflicted. This, we think, must be estimated by thousands of dollars. Pails full of the hail-stones, brought ten miles to the city several hours after the storm, showed stones that were still of extraordinary size.

ROCKVILLE, June 2.—We were visited here yesterday, about 3 P. M., by the most terrific hail storm ever known. The hail stones came from half an inch to two inches in diameter, having the general shape and appearance of a peeled onion, and weighed, some of them, an ounce and over. I measured one, during the storm, and measured 7¼ inches in circumference, and one this morning, sixteen hours after the storm, that measured 5½ inches. The storm lasted some twenty minutes, and exceeded anything of the kind that ever visited this vicinity, within the memory of the oldest inhabitant. Cherries are almost entirely stripped from the trees, also pears, apples, and foliage generally cut off.

The ground is literally covered, this morning, with leaves and fruit. Strawberries are ruined, gardens beaten as bare as flagstones, rye destroyed, and all crops up nearly destroyed. Tobacco plants are beaten entirely to pieces. Roads also badly washed, and window-glass in demand.

Houses, without blinds, had their windows nearly all dashed in in five minutes. Skylights did not remain at all. The American mill lost three hundred dollars' worth of glass, and other mills in proportion, while almost every dwelling-house lost more or less. The storm came from the Northwest, and how extensive it was is not known here.

Death of Marshal Pelissier.

The death of the Duke of Malakoff was announced by the last steamer from England.—His full name was Amiable Jean Jacques Pelissier, and his entire career has been passed in the French army. He was born at Maromme, near Rouen, November 6, 1794, and educated at the military school of St. Cyr.—In 1815 he was appointed a sub-lieutenant of the artillery, and served in the army of the Rhine. After the events of 1815 he devoted himself to the study of military science, retaining his connection with the army, and after various minor promotions, he was in 1823 an aid-de-camp of Gen Grundler in the Spanish war. The same year he was decorated with the cross of the Legion of Honor and of St. Ferdinard of Spain. Returning to France he was in 1828 promoted to captaincy, and in 1828 and 1829 served with distinction in Greece. In 1830 he made his first visit on army business to Algiers; and after a long sojourn in France, again returned to Algiers in 1840, as "Colonel and Assistant Chief of the General Staff of the Army of Algeria."

In 1845 occurred an event with which his name has been long and unpleasantly associated. An insurrection occurred at Algiers, and St. Arnaud, De l'Ammirault and Pelissier, were the commanding officers. One tribe called the "Ouled Riahs" refused to submit, and could not be subjected, as they lived entirely in large caves where it would have been madness for the French soldiers to have followed. Pelissier then conceived the idea of smoking them out; and after flinging a few burning faggots into the mouth of the cave, he made offers of life and liberty if the natives would yield. But the majority of those in the cave were still opposed to submission. More faggots were thrown in and cries and shrieks were heard; soon all was still, and a few days after five hundred bodies of suffocated men, women and children were brought out by the French troops.

This frightful circumstance aroused in Paris as well as throughout the rest of Europe a lively indignation against its author, Pelissier, who declared that he acted only in accordance with the strict orders of his commanding officer. Three years later he was made a field marshal, and in 1848 he was made commandant of the division of Oran, which post he filled till the breaking out of the Crimean war.

It is in this conflict that he won his widest reputation as a military man. He was appointed second in command under Canrobert, and on the resignation of the latter was made his successor. He took part in the principal battles of the Crimea, and was chief in command