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The Great Panic: Being Incidents Connected with Two Weeks of the War in Tennessee, 1862

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THE
GREAT PANIC:

BEING

INCIDENTS CONNECTED WITH TWO WEEKS OF THE
WAR IN TENNESSEE.

"It would be argument for a week, laughter for a month, and a good jest for-
ever!"—SHAKESPEARE.

BY AN EYE-WITNESS.

NASHVILLE:
JOHNSON & WHITING, PUBLISHERS
1862.

A Liberal Discount to Dealers.

8/31/92

THE GREAT PANIC.

Estates

Left of Richd. Spawing

University Library

THE FIGHT AT FORT DONELSON AND ITS EFFECT IN NASHVILLE.

THE panic which the announcement of the fall of Fort Donelson created is without a parallel in the history of Nashville, and a narration of the events of the three or four days that preceded it is necessary to a proper understanding of that panic.

Immediately after the fall of Fort Henry it became evident that the next point to be attacked by the Federal army would be Fort Donelson, and vigorous efforts were made by the Confederates to prepare that post for the expected onslaught. The extent to which these preparations were carried was such as to inspire confidence in the strength of the Fort and the ability of the garrison to withstand a combined land and water attack. The commencement of the fight was announced in the following dispatch received here the night of its date:

Special Dispatches to the Nashville Union and American.

CUMBERLAND CRR, Feb. 12.—One Federal gunboat appeared in sight of Fort Donelson this morning about 10 o'clock, and opened fire upon the Fort. The fire was returned by the Fort, when the boat retired.

The Federals have landed in force and a battle with light artillery commenced this evening. They are reported to have ten or twelve thousand. The steamer bringing the news says the battle was raging when it left, but knew nothing further.

This intelligence, which was made public on the morning of the 13th, created no alarm for the safety of the Fort, as it was understood that large reinforcements had been sent forward, and were still being sent, to the relief of those who garrisoned that post.

40000

The attack was renewed on the 13th, and the following account of it by telegraph, was from a source in whom the fullest confidence was placed:

Special Dispatches to the Nashville Union and American.

FROM FORT DONELSON--FIGHTING ALL DAY--THE ENEMY REPULSED EVERYWHERE--
PROBABLE RENEWAL OF THE FIGHT.

FORT DONELSON, Feb. 13, 11:30 A. M.—The enemy commenced the attack on our lines with his artillery this morning before sunrise, to which our batteries promptly replied, and the fire has continued up to the present time, increasing, as the fight progressed, in the number of pieces, and occasionally in the rapidity of the firing. The enemy has kept at a respectful distance. The field artillery was engaged all along the line.

We feel confident that we shall be able to maintain our river defenses.

SECOND DISPATCH.

FORT DONELSON, Feb. 13, 2:45 P. M.—The enemy has ceased firing, possibly that he may change his position. We have so far repulsed him at every point of our lines.

Capt. Dixon, of the Engineers, was killed in the battery by an injury to his gun carriage. Lieut. Burns, of the Artillery, was killed.

The enemy's gunboat has retired, and we think it was seriously injured. Our men are in fine spirits.

THIRD DISPATCH.

FORT DONELSON, Feb. 13.—The day has almost past, and we still hold our own. We have repulsed the enemy everywhere, and driven back his gunboat. We have whipped him by both land and water. He still lies around, and will most probably attack us again in the morning.

Our loss is not very great; that of the enemy must be very heavy.

We have had lively fighting and heavy cannonading all around our lines throughout the day.

The fire from our guns told effectively upon the enemy's gunboat, and we feel satisfied the boat was materially injured, as it retired twice.

Our lines are entrenched all around.

This intelligence excited high anticipations for the success of the Confederates, and those anticipations were heightened by the result of the contest on the 14th, which was announced by telegraph as follows:

Special Dispatches to the Nashville Union and American.

FROM FORT DONELSON--TERRIFIC ARTILLERY DUEL--THE ENEMY'S GUNBOATS EASILY
INJURED--THEY RETIRE--NOBODY HURT ON OUR SIDE.

FORT DONELSON Feb. 14.—The enemy's gunboats opened fire upon the Fort this afternoon at half past three o'clock.

SECOND DISPATCH.

FORT DONELSON, Feb. 14.—Six of the enemy's gunboats attacked the Fort this afternoon. A terrific fight of near two hours ensued. Not a man or gun on our side was hurt.

Two of the gunboats were badly injured and a third was crippled. All retired. Gen. Pillow was in command. No demonstration was made by the infantry to-day. The enemy is believed to have received reinforcements. We expect to have it all round to-morrow.

THIRD DISPATCH.

FORT DONELSON, Feb. 14.—We have just had the fiercest fight on record between our guns and the enemy's gunboats, which lasted two hours.

The gunboats came within two hundred yards of our battery. We drove them back, damaging two of them badly and crippling a third. No damage was done to our battery, and not a man was killed.

This intelligence was published here the morning of the 15th. About this time it became noised about the city that Bowling Green, which everybody regarded as impregnable, was being evacuated, coupled with which was a statement, as coming from Gen. JOHNSTON, that no additional reinforcements could be sent to Fort Donelson. It was further stated the evening of the 14th that the evacuation of Bowling Green had so far progressed as to leave but a small portion of the Confederate troops and a limited amount of stores there. A rumor was circulated about the city that evening, (the 14th,) that the Federals had appeared in considerable force on the opposite side of Barren River from Bowling Green, that they had shelled and burned the town, captured several cars and engines and a large amount of provisions, and had cut off the retreat of a portion of the rear guard of the Confederate troops. This rumor, like all ill-omened rumors, spread with great rapidity and exerted a depressing influence upon the people. The extraordinary movements about the Commissary and Ordnance Departments, which had been going on for two or three days, excited much apprehension concerning the safety of Nashville, it being argued that if the authorities thought it prudent to remove the public stores, they could not regard Nashville as entirely safe. These fears were, however, entirely removed by the first intelligence of the fight that day, (the 15th,) which was received and published in an extra by noon, and which was succeeded by other extras, all inspiring the highest anticipations of victory. We give these dispatches as they were published the morning of the 16th:

From the Nashville Union and American, Feb. 16.

GLORIOUS NEWS—RUSH TO THE BATTLE—OUR TROOPS NOW TRIUMPHING.

FORT DONELSON, Feb. 16, 10:30 A. M.—One of the fiercest fights on record commenced here this morning about seven o'clock on our left wing. We have driven

the enemy past their camps with great slaughter. The fight is still raging on both sides. Just saw a Lincoln prisoner, who belongs to the 30th Illinois regiment, who says their forces number 60,000, and are commanded by Gen. McClelland.

Our boys are fighting with great gallantry, driving the enemy as they go. Will give you the news as it comes from the field. Almost incessant discharges of musketry and artillery going on; but sound getting further off.

FORT DONELSON, Feb. 16, 11 A. M.—We have captured two of their batteries and repulsed them everywhere. The fight is still going on.

FORT DONELSON, 11:5 A. M.—They say the loss on both sides is very heavy—the Yankees the most. The Tennessee, Mississippi, Texas and Alabama boys, and all the rest are doing the thing finely.

SECOND DISPATCH—STILL LATER AND MORE GLORIOUS.

FORT DONELSON, 12:50 P. M.—I think I can safely say the day is ours. The enemy's loss is tremendous. About 200 Yankees are now here, who report their regiments nearly annihilated.

THIRD DISPATCH.

FORT DONELSON, Feb. 16, 1 P. M.—We have whipped them by land and water. Not one of my men lost.

FOURTH DISPATCH—THE LATEST AND MOST GLORIOUS.

We fought the enemy outside of our entrenchments from half past 6 A. M. to 1 P. M., driving them inch by inch from every point in the field, capturing four pieces of artillery and a large number of prisoners. Our loss is heavy, and we have inflicted a heavy loss upon the enemy. They are largely reinforced and may attack us again.

FIFTH DISPATCH—LATEST FROM FORT DONELSON—SOME DETAILS OF THE FIGHT.

FORT DONELSON, Feb. 16, 7 P. M.—To relieve this post of an investment, which would have soon reduced it, we attacked the enemy at daylight this morning outside our entrenchments. After seven hours hard fighting, we drove them completely from the field, killing not less than a thousand, and taking 250 prisoners and six pieces of artillery.

Late in the afternoon they received large reinforcements and attacked our right wing with fresh troops, before our men returned to position. They at first gained a temporary advantage, but were driven back finally.

They are again receiving reinforcements this evening and will probably renew the fight to-morrow. Our loss is heavy, but not near so severe as the enemy's. This is the bloodiest fight of the war.

The following dispatch, received at twelve o'clock the night of the 15th, was published in a city paper:

From the Nashville Patriot, Feb. 16:

FORT DONELSON, Feb. 15.—The enemy having invaded our lines, it was determined to attack them, which we did this morning at five and a half o'clock. Gen. Pillow led the attack upon the enemy's right flank, and after a most obstinate and sanguinary conflict, succeeded in driving the enemy from his position, and forcing him back towards his left flank.

Gen. Buckner led the attack on the right, in which many of his troops displayed great determination. Gen. Johnson (B. R.) led his command with Brumfield

and spirit in the conflict. Nothing could exceed the steady and determined courage of many of our troops, with numbers much less than half of the enemy.

We maintained a successful struggle, which continued for nine hours, and resulted in driving the enemy from the field with a loss on his part of 1,260 killed and wounded, of whom 1,000 were killed. About 300 prisoners were taken. We captured six pieces of artillery, and over 2,000 stand of arms. Our loss amounted to about 500 killed and wounded.

We have regarded the reproduction of these dispatches as necessary to a correct understanding of the panic. They inspired almost unbounded confidence, and nearly every one seemed to feel that the contest of Sunday, (the 16th) would result in a victory for the brave men who had held out so gallantly and successfully for four days against a vastly superior force. A large concourse of people from the surrounding country, eager to hear the news from Fort Donelson, had assembled in the city, and the successive extras that were issued, announcing the result of the fight as it progressed, were bought up and their contents devoured with the greatest avidity. On every corner the exploits of the Confederates formed the staple of conversation, and the highest tributes were paid to Southern valor. The excitement ran higher Saturday night, if possible, than during the day, and the dispatches as they came in, were listened to with an eagerness which plainly told the interest that was felt in the contest which then hung, as it were, upon the evenly poised balance of fate. Still, there were those who feared for the result of Sunday's work, since the Federals were being so largely reinforced by fresh troops. They felt that the fate of Fort Donelson hung upon the next day's fight, and that the Federals would go into the contest with the advantages all in their favor, having fresh troops, while the Confederates were worn out with four days' terrible fighting. Notwithstanding this was the feeling of quite a number, the great body of the people of Nashville retired to their couches strongly impressed with the belief that the Confederates, who had already fought four days with victory seemingly theirs, would conquer on the fifth.

So passed Saturday night in Nashville. How different at Fort Donelson, the sequel will show!

THE GREAT PANIC—ITS RISE AND PROGRESS.

Before ten o'clock Sunday morning a rumor, vague and indefinite, it is true, that Fort Donelson had surrendered, and that the entire Confederate force had been taken prisoners, had found its way into

the streets of the city, and was spreading with a rapidity which only such rumors can spread. It was the rebound which was least expected by the great mass, and it assumed the most terrible proportions as it traveled. This rumor was accompanied with the statement that General BUELL, with thirty-five thousand men, was then at Springfield, only twenty-five miles distant, and that a fleet of Federal gunboats had passed Clarksville and would reach here by three o'clock in the afternoon, by which time BUELL's army would arrive in Edgefield, when the city would be shelled, without notice, and laid in ashes. These rumors created a consternation which it would be impossible to portray. A reign of terror and confusion ensued, the like of which was never witnessed in Nashville. "How is this?" asked a gentleman we met as we were going up town to learn the facts in regard to the rumors alluded to. "We whipped the enemy badly all day yesterday," he continued, "and now, so early in the morning, it is announced that all is lost." We assured him that the affair was as much a mystery to us as to him, when, with the exclamation, "I can't understand it!" he hurried to his home to quiet, if possible, the "better-half."

We found the town in a perfect tumult—a furor that lashed into a phrenzy those who were regarded perfect models of the calm and passionless—and the wave was spreading with fearful rapidity. Not a man was there in all the goodly city who stepped forth to tell the people that there was no cause for the alarm to which they had given way. It was understood that the intelligence of the fall of Fort Donelson had been communicated to Gov. HARRIS by Gen. JOHNSTON, and that it was from the former the rumor proceeded. His office at the Capitol was besieged by anxious inquirers, and he was appealed to, through one of his aids, to issue a proclamation setting forth the facts as far as they were in his possession, which, of itself, would quiet the people; that if left the victims of conjecture, the most wild and improbable stories would obtain, causing a panic without a parallel, because without a sufficient cause, while a simple statement of the facts as they really existed, without any attempt at explanation, would have a tendency to allay the excitement that then existed. The Governor, however, declined to issue a proclamation. Some thought that Gen. JOHNSTON should issue a proclamation, others that the Mayor should, and still others that the editors of the respective papers, who were quite pro-

ficient in "making the worse appear the better part," should issue extras assuring the people that matters were not half so bad as they appeared. Nothing, however, was done to quiet the people who were almost deranged with excitement, and hundreds were seen hurrying to and fro, preparing to flee, as for dear life, before the approach of an enemy they feared but little less than if they had been semi-barbarians.

The services at the churches were generally discontinued, in consequence of the excited state of the public mind, and, unfortunately, some of the pastors, in dismissing their congregations, added to the intensity of the excitement instead of allaying it. Many of those who attended one of the churches, misapprehending, perhaps, the purport of what the pastor said, returned home and reported that he had advised his hearers to quietly retire from the city for fear of an insurrection. We cannot think that such advice was given, but he was so understood by a number of his congregation, and it produced the most painful apprehensions in the minds of those who heard him as well as those to whom they communicated their impression of what he said. A moment's reflection, however, should have satisfied every one that there was no danger to be apprehended on this score from the servile or any other portion of our population.

About this time (say eleven o'clock) a report was put in circulation, as coming from Gov. HARRIS, that the women and children must be removed from the city within three hours, as at the expiration of that time the enemy would shell the place and destroy it. This outrageous story created the most terrible alarm wherever it went, and it spread like wildfire. We met this rumor on our return from the capitol, and it is due to Gov. HARRIS to say that he never intimated any such thing. There is no doubt, however, that this rumor hurried hundreds from the city, as the contradiction traveled much slower than the original story. Men and women were to be seen running to and fro in every portion of the city, and large numbers were hastening with their valuables to the several railroad depots, or escaping in private conveyances to some place of fancied security in the country. The hire of private conveyances was put up to fabulous prices, and it was only the wealthy that could enjoy the luxury of a ride on that day. Large numbers, in their eagerness to escape from the city, left on foot carrying with them such articles as they wished to preserve, either as

mementoes or for their comfort, and of course these must necessarily have been few.

Upon the receipt of the intelligence of the capitulation of Fort Donelson, Gen. JOHNSTON advised Gov. HARRIS to remove the archives of the State to some place of safety, as it might become necessary to evacuate Nashville. In accordance with this suggestion, the archives were packed up and shipped in a special train during the afternoon to Memphis, whither they were accompanied by the Governor and heads of departments. The Legislature met at an early hour of the morning, and went through the formality of adjourning to meet upon the call of the Governor, and the following notice was served on the members:

EXECUTIVE OFFICE, }
NASHVILLE, FEBRUARY 16, 1862. }

The members of the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee will assemble at Memphis, Tenn., on Thursday next, the 20th inst., for the despatch and transaction of such business as may be submitted to them.

ISHAM G. HARRIS.

This temporary removal of the seat of government was done in accordance with a resolution adopted by the two houses of the General Assembly in secret session a few days previous.

We were at the Capital a short time before the Legislature met. Messengers had been sent around to hurry up the laggard members, and as those who were present strolled about "from pillar to post," from door to window, eagerly gazing for the appearance of some fellow-member, so as to get a quorum. Their faces presented the most interesting study we have ever beheld in human nature. The actions of all told how eager they were to get away from "the doomed city." We had heard of "long faces," but that scene beat anything we had pictured from the most extravagant stories. Anxiety and fear struggled for the mastery in almost every countenance, and in one or two instances where the latter had manifestly asserted its supremacy, that "pallor which sets upon the brow of death," was but too visible where the ruddy glow of excellent satisfaction was marked the day before.

"Ah! how 'is it with you?
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits do widely peep,
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
Your bedded hair, like life in exertments,
Starts up, and stands on end."

It is said the members of the Legislature presented rather a ludicrous appearance as they trudged off towards the depot of one or the other of the railroads, each one with his trunk on his back or carpet sack and bundle in hand. As it was next to impossible to procure a vehicle to convey one even to the depot, those who chose not to witness the promised exhibition of fire-works by Gen. BUELL and Com. FOOTE, "stood not on the order of their going."

"Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble."

These movements of the Governor and Legislature had a tendency to increase the excitement, while the passage through the city at an early hour in the day of a large portion of Gen. JOHNSTON'S army from Bowling Green, was another incentive to the growth of the panic, which continued to spread until it seemed to have seized upon almost every one. Go where a person would, the question met him at almost every other step, "What are you going to do?" or, "What shall I do?" To the former, the most frequent reply was, "I don't know," with here and there an exception, "I shall stay and take care of my family." Very few appeared inclined to give advice in the midst of such a panic, even to their most intimate friends, so that the second question was rarely answered, and each man was left to decide for himself whether he should leave the city, and go, he knew not where, nor for why, or remain and take his chances with those who had prudence enough to stay quietly at home, and those, less, or perhaps more, fortunate, who could not get away.

Every available vehicle was chartered, and even drays were called into requisition, to remove people and their plunder, either to the country or to the depots, and the trains went off crowded to their utmost capacity, even the tops of the cars being literally covered with human beings. It was a lamentable sight to see hundreds of families thus fleeing from their homes, leaving nearly everything behind, to seek protection and the comforts and luxuries they had abandoned among strangers.

A large number of citizens left the city from fear of fire. They had been led to believe that the town would be shelled during the afternoon or night at farthest, and reduced to a heap of ruins. These went only a short distance into the country, and returned as soon as they felt they could do so with safety.

No effort was made to allay this frightful panic. Had a proclamation been issued by some of our authorities, civil or military, stating the facts as they existed, so far as known, that of itself would, in all probability, have assured the people, and reason might have assumed its place again before the scenes we have referred to, and others over which a mantle should be drawn, were enacted. There may have been "a military necessity" for the course that was pursued in this matter, but the people were wholly unable to appreciate such reticence, when a few words would have gone far towards quieting their fears.

Early in the day the yellow flag was hoisted over a number of buildings occupied as hospitals. Over one business house we noticed the British flag floating. The Bank of Tennessee, with its effects, was removed to Columbia, and several of our bankers gathered up their specie and other valuables and carried them to some point which they regarded as more secure than Nashville. The Planters', Union, and City Banks were the only ones that remained, but whether they retained their specie is not known to the public.

Much anxiety was manifested to know Gen. JOHNSTON's purposes in regard to holding the city, many favoring and others opposing such a policy. So clamorous were the people upon this point, that, during the afternoon, Gen. BARROW, the Senator from Davidson county, who had remained at home to share with his people the fate that might befall them, in company with Mayor CHEATHAM, visited Gen. JOHNSTON at his headquarters in Edgefield to ascertain what he should do in this behalf. Gen. JOHNSTON informed them that his army was not then in a condition to make a stand here, and that he should make no effort to defend the city. On their return, Messrs. BARROW and CHEATHAM addressed the crowd assembled upon the Public Square, informing them that they had Gen. JOHNSTON's assurance that he would not hazard the safety of the city by attempting to hold it, and they advised the people to remain quietly at home in the pursuit of their ordinary avocations, and expressed the conviction that they would not be molested. Mayor CHEATHAM also stated that upon the approach of the Federals he should, in company with a committee of our wisest, most discreet citizens, go out under a flag of truce to meet the commanding General and make a formal surrender of the city, and

that he should negotiate for the best possible terms for the protection of the rights and property of the citizens. He further stated that the provisions in the commissary stores, which could not be removed by the Confederate authorities, would be distributed among the people, so that there need be no fear of suffering for the want of the necessities of life by those thrown out of employment by the state of things now upon us. These assurances quieted somewhat the minds of the people, especially those who feared the shock of a battle in the immediate vicinity of the city.

Three o'clock came, and still time sped on, but neither Gen. BUELL'S army nor the gunboats, on which

"The nimble gunner
With his stock now the devilish cannon touches,"

had arrived. By this time the people began to understand that Gen. BUELL'S army could not, by any possibility, have got to Springfield, so that the fears of danger from that source were quieted. It was given out as coming from a high official, that the gunboats would reach here about twelve o'clock that night, and this was used to keep up the panic.

Great fears were entertained that the torch would be applied to the city during the night, and an urgent appeal was made to Gen. JOHNSON for protection against incendiaries. A regiment of Missouri troops was detailed to guard the city, and faithfully did they perform the duty assigned them. The night was passed in a degree of quiet which was surprising as well as gratifying.

Thus passed the most exciting Sunday we ever witnessed in Nashville.

Monday morning, the 17th, came, but it brought no gunboats or Federal troops. It had rained considerably the previous night and the streets were full of mud, yet the Confederate troops continued to pour in in a continuous stream, and the city was soon filled with soldiers, wet, hungry, and worn out by long and continuous marches. As the day wore away they gradually fell back Southward, so that comparatively few remained in the city over night.

The excitement of the previous day had abated but little. Business of all kinds was suspended and the stores and shops closed. Almost every body seemed to be upon the streets, hurrying to and fro, many seeking friends to advise with, while perhaps the same

friends were out upon a similar mission; others were to be seen congregated in little groups upon the corners discussing the probabilities of the future, or listening to the miraculous stories of some soldier who had escaped from Fort Donelson, and,

"As full of peril and adventurous spirit
As to o'er-walk a current roaring loud
On the uncertain footing of a spear,"

had made their way to this city. Some of them told wonderful stories. We recollect encountering one in our perambulations, who professed to have followed Gen. FLOYD through his campaign in Western Virginia, and his graphic descriptions of how his chieftain eluded the plodding ROSECRANS formed quite a spicy little episode in the panic of that day. A "Maury county boy" was entertaining an interested crowd on another corner with the daring exploits that were performed at Fort Donelson, and wound up by declaring that he could have walked upon the bodies of dead Yankees for acres without ever touching the ground.

Many who were wealthy removed themselves and what property they could take with them out of town, while the thousands of poor had no alternative but to remain and make the best disposition of themselves they could, as there was no possibility of getting out of town, except at enormous cost, the military authorities having taken charge of all the railroads leading out from the city, and the owners of vehicles refused to hire them out, unless the hirer would pay a price approximating the cost of carriages and horses. Notwithstanding these exorbitant demands, large numbers paid the price and left the city, seemingly with no object in view except to get out of Nashville.

Of course, the city was filled with rumors of every conceivable description, and it would have been perfect folly to have attempted to glean a grain of truth from the reports which one would meet at every corner, yet thousands seemed to believe everything that was told in regard to the numbers and rapid approach of the Federals, so true is it, that

"Rumor doth double, like the voice and echo,
The numbers of the fear'd."

At one time it was asserted with a degree of confidence that almost inspired belief in the sincerity of the narrator, that the gunboats were only a few miles below the city, then another would

assert, in terms equally as positive, that there was not a Federal soldier of Gen. BUELL's army this side of the Kentucky line, nor a gunboat this side of Clarksville. It was evident that not a few were trying to "play upon a harp of a thousand strings."

ARRIVAL OF GENs. PILLOW AND FLOYD—THE SURRENDER OF FORT DONELSON.

During Sunday a rumor reached the city that Generals PILLOW and FLOYD had escaped from Fort Donelson with a portion of their respective commands, after the surrender had been determined upon. This rumor was subsequently confirmed by telegraph from Clarksville. A boat arrived here early Monday morning, which brought these Generals up, together with a number of officers and privates who had participated in the engagement at Fort Donelson, and much anxiety was manifested to hear their version of the capitulation of that post, and many called upon them to satisfy themselves in regard to the matter. The purport of the information imparted by them was, that the Federals had been largely reinforced Saturday evening by fresh troops, and that it was regarded impossible for the already worn out Confederates to protract the unequal contest, with no hope of receiving reinforcements and that at a council of war held that night it was determined to surrender, and that previous to the surrender, they, with a portion of their respective commands, made their escape. The statement was meagre and unsatisfactory, and as this point in the history of the war is one in which the people of Nashville then took a deep interest, we have thought it not amiss to incorporate here the fullest and most satisfactory account of the events immediately preceding the capitulation we have seen. It was communicated to the New Orleans *Picayune* by a correspondent, who writes from Decatur, Ala., under date of the 15th of March. The following is his statement:

The denunciations, wrongs, and injustice heaped upon Gen. A. S. Johnston, for his retrograde movement, are in every way undeserved. Long before General Johnston was compelled to make his retrograde movement, he addressed letters to the Governors of the different States; informing them of the condition of affairs, and was thus compelled to expose his feeble condition; but neither the people nor the government listened to his admonitions. As I have before stated, General Johnston had become convinced that neither Bowling Green nor Donelson was tenable; and, with the hope of saving the latter, he sent all the reinforcements he could spare to Dover, reserving for himself a force hardly sufficient to cover his own retreat had the enemy fallen upon him.

It is stated that the message of President Davis, in relation to Fort Donelson, says that the reports of Floyd and Pillow do not state that reinforcements were asked for; and it is not shown that the position could not be evacuated, and the whole army saved, as well as part. Nor is it shown by what authority the two senior Generals abandoned their responsibility by transferring their commands to junior officers. In explanation, in part, of the omissions thus stated, and as part of the history of the surrender of Fort Donelson, I have obtained from a junior officer, who was present on that occasion, the following reliable statement of the particulars of the surrender, which will be read with interest:

On the morning of the 16th of February, about one o'clock, it had been determined by the commanding officers to cut our way through the enemy's lines, destroy the army stores, and retreat from Dover to Nashville. For this purpose scouts were sent out to ascertain whether the enemy occupied the ground they had been driven from the day previous, and some of Forrest's men were ordered to inspect a slough, covered with back water from the river, to see if it was passable for infantry. The scouts returned soon after, and reported that the roads were perfectly alive with troops, and that their camp fires were burning in every direction; also that the slough was half leg deep in mire, and the water reaching to the saddle skirts. This information produced a change of operations, and a conference then took place, at which were present, Generals Floyd, Pillow and Buckner; Colonel Forrest and John C. Burch; Majors Oliver, Henry, Haynes and Jones, and Lieutenants Marlin and Nicholson, the two last being aids of Gen. Pillow.

Notwithstanding that communication was thus cut off, Gen. Pillow urged the necessity of making the attempt to cut our way out, or make a fight for one day more, in which time he thought that we could get steamboats enough to put the whole command across the river, and make our escape by Clarksville.

Gen. Buckner then said that, from the worn out and distressed condition of his men, and the occupation of his rifle pits on the extreme right by the enemy, he could not hold his position for half an hour if attacked by the enemy at daylight, which he would certainly do.

Gen. Pillow replied: "Why can't you? I think you can, sir," and added that the occupation of our rifle pits by the enemy left an open gateway to our river battery, and he thought we ought to cut our way through, at all hazards.

Gen. Buckner retorted, saying: "I know my position; I can only bring to bear against the enemy 4,000 men, while he can oppose me with any given number."

Gen. Pillow then said: "Well, gentlemen, what do you intend to do? I am in favor of fighting out."

Gen. Floyd then asked Gen. Buckner what he had to say.

Gen. Buckner replied quickly that to attempt to cut our way out through the enemy's lines would cost a sacrifice of three-fourths of the command, and that no General had the right to make such a sacrifice of human life.

Gen. Floyd admitted the fact and concurred with Gen. Buckner on this point.

Gen. Pillow then remarked that there was but one alternative left, and that was capitulation; and addressing himself to General Floyd, said: "Sir, I shall neither surrender the command nor myself; I will die first."

Gen. Floyd then said he also would not surrender himself, adding: "You know my relations with the Federal Government, and it would not do." [Alluding to his course when Secretary of War in distributing to the South its quota of arms.]

Gen. Buckner replied that he thought no personal feeling ought to control his official action.

Gen. Floyd admitted it, and said nevertheless it was his determination.

Gen. Buckner said: "Then, gentlemen, I suppose the surrender will devolve on me."

Gen. Floyd, addressing Buckner, said: "General, if you are put in command, will you allow me to take out my brigade?"

Gen. Buckner replied: "Yes, sir, if you move your command before I send my offer of capitulation to the enemy."

"Then," said Gen. Floyd, "I surrender the command."

Gen. Pillow, upon whom the command next devolved, said, "I will not accept it, as my purpose is fixed never to surrender."

General Buckner immediately replied, "I will accept it, and will share the fate of my command," and at once called for pen, ink and paper, and a bugler to sound a parley, it being too dark to send a flag of truce.

Gen. Pillow then asked if it would be proper for him to make his escape. To which Gen. Floyd replied, that was a question for every man to decide for himself, but that he would be glad for every man to make his escape that could.

Col. Forrest, addressing Gen. Buckner, said: "I think, General, there is more fight in our men than you suppose, but if you will let me, I will also take out my command." To which Buckner and Floyd both assented.

Turning to Gen. Pillow, Forrest then said, "General, I have fought under your command, what shall I do?" General Pillow answered, "Get your way out!" To which Forrest replied, "I will, by G—d!"

All the officers retired, leaving Gen. Buckner alone with the command.

The following is the correspondence between Gens. BUCKNER and GRANT, touching the surrender of Fort Donelson:

GENERAL BUCKNER'S NOTE TO GENERAL GRANT.

HEADQUARTERS, FORT DONELSON, February 16, 1862.

SIR: In consideration of all the circumstances governing the present situation of affairs at this station, I propose to the commanding officer of the Federal forces, the appointment of commissioners to agree upon terms of capitulation of the forces and post under my command, and in that view suggest an armistice until 12 o'clock.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant.

S. B. BUCKNER, Brigadier General.

To Brigadier General U. S. GRANT, commanding U. S. forces near Fort Donelson.

HEADQUARTERS, FORT DONELSON, February 16, 1862.

Major Casly will take or send by an officer, to the nearest picket of the enemy, the accompanying communication to Gen. Grant, and request information of the point where future communications will reach him. Also inform him that my headquarters will be for the present in Dover.

S. B. BUCKNER, Brigadier General.

GENERAL GRANT'S REPLY.

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY IN THE FIELD, CAMP NEAR FORT DONELSON, Feb. 16, 1862.

GENERAL S. B. BUCKNER, Confederate Army:

SIR: Yours of this date, proposing an armistice and appointment of Commissioners to settle terms of capitulation, is just received. No terms except unconditional and immediate surrender can be accepted. I propose to move immediately upon your works.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

U. S. GRANT, Brigadier General Commanding.

GENERAL BUCKNER TO GENERAL GRANT.

HEADQUARTERS, DOVER, TENNESSEE, February 16, 1862.

To BRIGADIER GENERAL U. S. GRANT, U. S. Army:

SIR: The distribution of the forces under my command, incident to an unexpected change of commanders, and the overwhelming force under your command, compel me, notwithstanding the brilliant success of the Confederate arms yesterday, to accept the ungenerous and unchivalrous terms you propose.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

S. B. BUCKNER, Brigadier General, C. S. A.

DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC STORES—SUBSIDENCE OF THE PANIC.

To return to Nashville. During the morning of Monday, the 17th, a small portion of the public stores was distributed, but an order from Gen. FLOYD was soon promulgated countermanding the distribution, and many a "poor, lone woman," and not a few men, who had reached the scene "just in time to be too late," turned away grievously disappointed. It was announced as the determination of Gen. FLOYD, who was in command of the post, to ship off the stores for the use of the army, and impressments of wagons and men were extensively made with the view of getting the provisions and other stores, not needed for the hospitals, to the railroad depots and placed in the cars, and large amounts were sent off during the day.

The timid were not yet assured that a battle would not be fought on the opposite side of the river, and their fears were heightened by rumors that Generals JOHNSTON, PILLOW and FLOYD had determined to make a stand a few miles out of the city, and the counter-marching of troops, in the rain which continued to pour down most of the forenoon, gave color to these rumors. So general had become the conviction that a battle was to be fought almost upon the confines of the city, and that it would be necessary for the women and children to seek safety in flight from the impending conflagration which was to sweep Nashville, "at one fell swoop," from the face of the earth, that it became necessary for Gen. BARROW and Mayor CHEATHAM to again confer with Gen. JOHNSTON, to ascertain whether he had changed his purposes with regard to Nashville. Upon their return they each briefly addressed the eager crowd assembled upon the Public Square, stating that they had the assurance of Gen. JOHNSTON that, at a council of war held that morning, Generals PILLOW and FLOYD fully agreed with him that, under the circumstances and in the condition of the Confederate troops, it would not only be hazardous but impolitic to make a stand here, and that the Confederate army would retire be-

fore the arrival of the Federal troops, and leave the city to be quietly turned over to Gen. BUELL. Thus was removed all fear of danger to the safety of the city from an apprehended collision in the immediate vicinity.

During his remarks Mayor CHEATHAM stated that the remainder of the public stores would be distributed to the people under the supervision of competent and reliable gentlemen to be designated by himself, who would see that a fair and equitable distribution was made, so that every body in the city who needed should get a fair proportion. This was done, he said, to prevent parties from getting more than they needed, while others, who, really were in want, would perhaps get none. This announcement was satisfactory to the crowd and they quietly dispersed.

SPEECHES BY GEN. PILLOW AND FLOYD.

Late in the afternoon a handbill was issued announcing that Gen. PILLOW would address the people on the Public Square at seven o'clock that evening. Long before the hour designated had arrived, a very large crowd assembled to hear what the General, fresh from the bloody field of Fort Donelson, had to say, for it was not known to what subject he would address himself. At the time appointed Gen. PILLOW addressed the people briefly, not occupying exceeding five minutes' time, informing them that no stand would be made here for the purpose of defending the city, that it would be left to the civil authorities to surrender it into the hands of the Federals, and counseling them to remain quiet and orderly at home. "The Federals," he said, "will be with you only for a time, and I pledge you my honor that this war will not end until they are driven across the Ohio river. The officers who will come among you are gentlemen, and, of course, will behave as such towards you." After some remarks about the terrible fight at Fort Donelson, Gen. PILLOW retired and left immediately upon the cars for his home near Columbia.

Subsequently the crowd called on Gen. FLOYD, at the residence of S. D. MORGAN, Esq., and in response to repeated calls for him, he appeared upon the steps and addressed them briefly, confirming what Gen. PILLOW had said in regard to the surrender of Nashville. The surrender of Fort Donelson, he said, was an event that human foresight could not guard against. The soldiers sent to defend that place had been on duty for four days and nights, and

human endurance must have an end. In regard to the policy of falling back, he contended it was wise and judicious; that the Confederates would be sure to whip the Federals when they got them back into the mountain gorges, away from their gunboats; that there had been too much glorification of the South and depreciation of the North, and that the time had come now when every man must fight.

CLOSING OF THE POST-OFFICE AND SUSPENSION OF THE NEWSPAPERS.

The post office was closed at an early hour in the morning, the establishment having been removed to Murfreesboro'. For more than two weeks Nashville was entirely isolated, no mails having been received from or sent off to any point. Notwithstanding the Federals did not take possession of Nashville for more than a week after the grand stampede, no mails were received from the South after that of the morning of the 16th, having all been stopped at Murfreesboro'.

All the newspapers in the city were suspended, the stores and business houses were closed, and a melancholy gloom hung over the city. For fully ten days, it seemed one continuous Sabbath, the silence of which was broken only when there was a distribution of provisions or an effort made to ship them off. It has been truly said that half the people one met during this period looked as though they had lost their next best friend.

BURNING OF THE GUNBOATS.

During the night of Monday, the 17th, the two boats that were being converted into gunboats, were burned at the wharf by order of the military authorities, and as the fire-bell pealed out its terrifying notes of warning, in "the dead watches of the night," thousands were aroused from their slumbers expecting, from the bright glare that met their gaze, as they hastily peered through their windows, to see the city one vast conflagration. It had been freely circulated during that and the previous day, that some of Gen. JOHNSON's troops had sworn in their wrath that they would reduce the city, which they regarded as of so much importance to the Confederate States, to a heap of ashes sooner than see it turned over to the Federals. These threats were mainly attributed to the Texas Rangers, and it is due to Gen. JOHNSON to say that he had sent them South among the first troops that passed through the city on Sunday, and that only a few straggling Rangers

were in the city afterwards. Whether these rumors had any foundation in reality was of little consequence; they served the purpose of frightening thousands of people almost out of their wits, and they were only assured when the cause of the alarm was ascertained. The impropriety of such a conflagration at night, was clearly demonstrated, but the lesson was not heeded.

DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC STORES RESUMED.

The morning of Tuesday, the 18th, dawned cloudy, damp and chilly, but with it came no intelligence of the gunboats, except a repetition of the idle rumors of the previous day.

The distribution of the Government stores was again commenced, and large amounts of various kinds were given out during the day. This distribution created much excitement and serious fears of a riot were entertained. Indeed, it was all the Mayor and city police, in connection with the military, could do to keep even an approach to order in one or two localities. A good deal of the stores, especially in the Quartermaster's department, was turned over to thousands of poor women who had labored faithfully for the Confederate Government for months past, in satisfaction of the balances due them. The rush made to the Quartermaster's store by hundreds of women and men, who hoped to get a portion of the goods distributed, was closely akin to a mob, and the wonder is that many were not seriously injured.

DESTRUCTION OF THE BRIDGES.

It was known to a good many citizens on Monday that the destruction of the railroad and suspension bridges had been determined on as a military necessity, and this work was expected to have been accomplished Monday night, but for some reason, satisfactory, it is presumed, to the authorities, it was not done. The fact became generally known on Tuesday, and urgent appeals were made to Gen. FLOYD (Gen. JOHNSON and PILLOW having left the city) to spare the suspension bridge, as it was of the highest importance to the people of Nashville to have uninterrupted communication with the other side of the river, from whence, for a time at least, they would have to draw all their market supplies. His uniform answer was, that the destruction of both bridges was regarded as a military necessity, and that it was his imperative duty to put into execution the plans agreed upon.

Tuesday night the torch was applied to the railroad bridge and in a short time all that remained of that splendid structure were the naked pillars and abutments and a few smoking fragments of timber. The precaution had been taken in this instance to prevent the fire-bells giving the alarm, so that the burning of the bridge was witnessed by comparatively few persons; and the event did not arouse the fears of those who had expected a general conflagration. This bridge was one of the finest draw-bridges in the country, and was built for the joint use of the Louisville and Nashville and Edgfield and Kentucky railroads, at a cost of about \$250,000. The funds to build it were loaned the two companies by the State of Tennessee under the general internal improvement laws. The bridge was built under the supervision and direction of Mr. A. ANDERSON, Chief Engineer of the Edgfield and Kentucky Railroad Company, and the trains passed over it the first time the 23th of October, 1859. The Nashville City Directory for 1860-61, contains the following interesting facts in regard to this bridge:

"Its length is 700 feet, in four spans; two fixed spans, one on each side, and two draw spans. Each fixed span is 200 feet in the clear between the supports, and the clear opening of each draw span is 120 feet, making it the longest railroad draw in the world; that at Rock Island, Ill., being 120 feet on one side and 116 on the other. The total length of draw from one extremity to the other of the moveable portion is 280 feet, and its entire weight is computed at 285 tons. It can readily be turned into position by one man in four and a half minutes. The bridge superstructure is of the kind known as McCallum's Truss, and was erected by Messrs. GRAY, WHITON & Co., contractors. The master builder was Mr. N. K. WARING.

"The masonry supporting the bridge was built by Messrs. MAXWELL, SAULFAY & Co., contractors, and consists of two abutments, two main piers, one centre pier, and two rest piers. The centre pier, on which the immense draw is turned, is circular, 30 feet in diameter at the top and 34½ feet at the bottom, and 68½ feet high, and contains 2,295½ perches of masonry. The eastern main pier is 75½ feet high, and contains 1,208½ perches of masonry. The western main pier is 70½ feet high, and contains 1072½ perches masonry. The foundations of all the piers are laid upon the solid rock, in water about twelve feet deep at ordinary low stages. The extreme rise of water at the bridge is 47 feet.

"The total quantity of masonry in the bridge is 6,800½ perches. In the superstructure are 454,000 feet of timber and 160,000 pounds of iron. A heavy frame work is built between the rest

piers, designed to prevent steamboats from being thrown against the piers while passing the draw, either by wind or the force of the current. In its construction 387,288 feet of timber were used, and 49,117 pounds of iron.

The wires of the suspension bridge were cut about the same time that the railroad bridge was fired, and the morning revealed a complete wreck of this magnificent structure. This fine bridge was about seven hundred feet long, and its height one hundred and ten feet above low water mark. It was built during the year 1850. The architect was Col. A. IRIMAN, of this city, who was in command of the tenth (Irish) Tennessee regiment at Fort Donelson, and was taken prisoner at the surrender of that post. The contractor was Mr. M. D. FIELD, brother of Mr. CYRUS W. FIELD, who superintended the laying down of the Atlantic telegraph cable.

This bridge was owned by a joint stock company, chartered by the State Legislature under the name of the Broad Street Bridge Company, and it paid handsome dividends to the stockholders. It has been stated by letter-writers from this place, and perhaps others, that the late Gen. ZOLLICOFFER owned a large amount of stock in this company—that nearly all he was worth consisted of this stock—and that by the destruction of the bridge, his children (all girls) had been left in destitute circumstances. Such is not the case. Gen. ZOLLICOFFER owned only \$8,000 of the stock of the company, and he was esteemed one of the "solid men" of Nashville. The rents from his improved property in the city alone yield a handsome income in ordinary times.

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, the 19th, 20th, 21st, and 22d, passed off without any notable change in the aspect of affairs.

DISTRIBUTION OF STORES—REPREHENSIBLE CONDUCT—ALMOST A RIOT—DISSATISFACTION.

The distribution of provisions and other government stores was resumed Wednesday morning, but was shortly afterwards suspended by order of Gen. FLOYD, who it appears came to the conclusion that the Federals were not as near Nashville as had been supposed, and that these supplies could yet be shipped off for the use of the Confederate army. Squads of cavalrymen were stationed in front of each store to keep off the crowds of people who had been drawn

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hither in expectation of getting a portion of what was to be distributed. They had come, some with wagons, some with wheelbarrows, some with baskets, and others, perhaps the largest portion, without anything, hoping to get a piece or two of meat with which to feed their little ones during the period they would be unable to get employment, consequent upon the deranged condition of affairs in Nashville. It was a matter of wonder with those who witnessed the conduct of these soldiers, that large numbers of women and children were not seriously injured, if not killed. Most of them were mounted upon spirited horses, and they would charge into the crowds at full speed, brandishing their swords or flourishing loaded pistols already cocked. It was painful to witness these exhibitions of recklessness on the part of men unused to the exercise of authority. We have often heard it said of a man, "He swears like a trooper," but we are forced to admit, after hearing a trooper swear, that the *simile* lacks in expressiveness. Such conduct was reprehensible to the last degree, and we feel satisfied the perpetrators would have been severely punished had the attention of the commanding General been directed to the matter.

A vigorous effort was made to get the provisions and other stores transferred to the railroad depot, and a large number of wagons from both the city and the surrounding country were impressed into the service, as were numbers of the citizens of Nashville. There was no system, however, in what was done, and everything went on pell-mell, and the consequence was, much remained undone that might have been accomplished.

The impression got out and prevailed pretty generally Friday morning, that the goods and clothing in the Quartermaster's department, on the corner of Front street and the Public Square, would be distributed that day to the poor and needy. It is said, however, the intention was to distribute what remained of these stores to those who had been working for the Confederate Government, especially the women, and had not been paid, as compensation for their services. The rumor attracted an immense crowd, and it was a motley one. All ages, color and sex were drawn thither in the hope of sharing a portion of the spoils. Hundreds of voices would demand that the doors be thrown open and free access given to everybody. The excited crowd swayed to and fro, and grew more clamorous for the promised distribution.

"They threw their caps
As they would hang them on the horns of the moon,
Shouting their emulation."

As the door would open for one or two of the beneficiaries to pass in or out, the crowd would make a surge before which it seemed almost impossible to stand, and it really appeared a miracle that in that wild commotion, which,

"Like a horse
Full of high feeding, madly huth broke loose,
And bears down all before him,"

limb and life escaped. The efforts of the police and military to preserve order were of no avail, and a serious riot was imminent. The Mayor appeared and appealed to the crowd to disperse, but his appeal was unheeded, and the impatience of the multitude was almost ready to break forth in that wild spirit

"Whose rage doth rend
Like interrupted waters, and o'erbear
What they are us'd to bear."

It was a critical moment, and luckily the Mayor bethought himself of an expedient which proved more effective than the bayonets of the soldiers. He ordered out the steam fire engine, and soon the muddy waters of the Cumberland were pouring down like an avalanche upon the excited populace. The effect was magical. Two or three men were knocked down by the powerful stream, many were thoroughly drenched, while others were well sprinkled, whereat those who escaped laughed most heartily. The passions of the people, wrought almost to "demonic phrensy," were cooled down, everybody was soon in a good humor the crowd was dispersed, and a disgraceful riot prevented. So much for cold water!

It was highly honorable in those having charge of these stores that they made an effort to turn a sufficiency of them over to those who had worked for the Confederate Government to compensate them for their services, and it is to be regretted that a number of poor women, who had toiled for that Government for weeks and months, failed to get their pay. They represent that they made the proper application before the hour for distribution arrived, but because they were unwilling to risk limb and life in the excited crowd that besieged the building, or from some other cause, they received nothing, and now hold remembrances of the Confederate Government in the shape of little bills, while others, "well to do

in the world," who had no little bills or claim of any character, have remembrances of the same Government in the shape of piles of cloth, and provisions, and groceries, sufficient to last them for a year or two.

The plan for distributing the provisions and other stores among the people, so that the poor and needy should be supplied, was admirably conceived, but unfortunately it failed in the execution, and the consequence has been very great dissatisfaction and the charge that favoritism was shown; that parties who really needed nothing got considerable quantities of valuable stores, while hacksters and even merchants were enabled to lay in supplies for which they can find no use in their own families. What truth there may be, or whether any, in these complaints of course we do not know.

THE SHIPPING OF PROVISIONS STOPPED—RUMORS.

The heavy rains of Monday, Wednesday and Saturday, had greatly interfered with the shipping of the army stores. The creeks were very much swollen, and the washing away of two small bridges on the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad, a few miles from the city, on Saturday evening, put a complete stop to the shipping business.

Every day brought forth a fresh brood of rumors as to the whereabouts of the Federals, and many speculations were indulged in as to their purposes. At one time it was stated that Gen. BUELL had informed Gen. JOHNSTON that he desired to fight him at Nashville, and that he would await his pleasure. To the question, "When will the Federals come?" it was answered that Gen. BUELL had said that if Gen. JOHNSTON did not consider Nashville worth holding, he did not consider it worth taking. To the uninitiated, it appeared that the City of Rocks was about to drop into an inglorious obscurity between the two armies. The delay of the Federals to take formal possession of Nashville gave time for "the sober second thought of the people," which Mr. VAN BUREN declared was "always right and never wrong," to dispel the panic which had seized upon them with such virulence the Sunday previous, and when the Federals did come their presence excited none of that alarm which the bare mention of the name had conjured up but ten days previous. So much for delay!

ARRIVAL OF THE FEDERAL PICKETS IN EDGEFIELD—INTERVIEW
WITH THE MAYOR.

A bright and beautiful morning was that of Sunday, the 23d. The city was remarkably quiet, and only here and there could be seen a Confederate cavalryman, the infantry, all who were able to travel, having left. About nine o'clock it was announced that the Federal pickets had made their appearance in Edgefield, on the opposite side of the river, and as the news spread through the city, a stream of human beings poured down to where the suspension bridge once was, and then down to the "Lower Landing," to get a peep at the men who were regarded with a curiosity akin to that which a traveling menagerie excites. A squad of perhaps half a dozen cavalrymen rode down to the bank of the river and took possession of, or rather stopped, a steamboat that was being used as a ferry boat, and the captain was informed that he could not return to this side, and the reason said to be assigned for the detention was, that the Confederates were not to be trusted with steamboats where they were likely to fall into the hands of the Federals, as they were in the habit of burning them under such circumstances. There had been a considerable amount of crossing that morning, but this action put an effectual stop to it.

MAYOR GREATHAM was sent for, and notwithstanding the river was considerably swollen and the surface almost covered with "drift wood," he crossed over in a small skiff, to meet the *avant couriers* of the grand army that was to take orphaned Nashville under its protectingegis. After a brief interview, the Mayor returned and addressed the people assembled upon the Public Square, informing them that he had just had an interview with the Captain of an Ohio cavalry company, who had authorized him to say that the property and rights of the people would be scrupulously protected. This assurance was very gratifying to the people, but still they were grievously disappointed. They had expected that, when they should be turned over to the Federals, a General, attended by "all the pomp and circumstance of glorious war," would come to receive them. Instead, however, half a dozen cavalrymen had come to take the capital of the great State of Tennessee! The reality presented so striking a contrast to their ideas of a week previous, that the lip of the most inveterate rebel who looked upon that picture was wreathed with a smile. It was

certainly a ludicrous *finale* to the scenes which the panic of the previous Sunday had pictured.

In the afternoon a Colonel of Ohio cavalry called at the river, when the Mayor again crossed the swollen river in a skiff to hold a parley with this second representative from the Federal army. After a brief interview, the Mayor returned to the City Hall, and in a few words addressed to the expectant crowd, stated that he had been reassured that the property and rights of private citizens would be protected in the broadest sense; that the people ought to remain at home, as they would be permitted to pursue their ordinary avocations without molestation; that when the Federals took formal possession, no soldier would be allowed to come within the corporate limits of the city, except at the request of the Mayor to preserve the peace; and that the public stores must be turned over to them. The Mayor stated further that he had inquired, "What of the negro question?" and had received for reply, that the Federals came to re-establish the Union and to offer the protection guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States, and that in this spirit, the property of every citizen, of whatever description, would be protected. The assurance given in regard to the "nigger question" had a perceptible influence in quieting the fears of some who anticipated trouble on that point.

In regard to the surrender of the city, the Colonel informed the Mayor that a General would be here on Monday or Tuesday, when formal military possession of the city would be taken and the terms made known.

FIRST NEWS OF THE GUNBOAT.

Monday, the 24th, the steamer C. E. Hillman, which had been sent down to Dover on Friday, under a flag of truce, by order of Gen. JOHNSTON, with a number of surgeons of this city, to render such services as were needed by the wounded at Fort Donelson, returned with the surgeons, whose kind offices were not needed, as the post was already supplied. They reported having passed a gunboat that morning, some thirty or forty miles below the city, and as it made only about four miles an hour and would "lie up" during the night, they supposed it would reach here about nine o'clock Tuesday morning, the 25th. That was the first reliable intelligence we had that a gunboat was coming to Nashville.

OCCUPATION OF NASHVILLE BY THE FEDERALS.

At an early hour of the morning of Tuesday, the 25th, the gunboat, accompanied by a number of transports, was descried from the Capitol making headway around the bend below Nashville, and the news of the approach of the Federals spread through the city with almost telegraphic rapidity. Curiosity was on tip-toe, and hundreds hastened to the "Lower Landing" to see the monster, for a gunboat was a greater curiosity than an elephant, as well as witness the debarkation of the Federal troops. The fleet continued to approach nearer the city, and when opposite the gas works the gunboat was made fast to the opposite shore, and, with its guns all run out at the port holes, frowning upon the beleaguered city, told plainly what would be its fate if the people did not act with the propriety becoming the occasion. It was an unnecessary warning, for the people had made up their minds to submit to their new rulers. They had no notion of acting as the Hon. THOS. CORWIN is reported to have said during the war with Mexico, he would have done had he been a Mexican, to have "welcomed the invaders with bloody hands to hospitable graves." They were in no plight, and not in condition if they had been in plight, to have given their visitors such a reception. But the Federals did not know this, and we are told they proceeded cautiously up the river, keeping a sharp look-out for "masked batteries," and before reaching the city forty rounds were issued to each soldier. To those of us who knew the defenseless condition of the people of Nashville, this preparation sounded odd enough. But they did not know our people or our situation, and so they determined not to be caught napping.

The Diana steamed up to the Landing with the sixth regiment of Ohio volunteers, the United States flag flying and the band playing "Hail Columbia." A few, among whom were some who had professed devotion to the Southern Confederacy, greeted the "invaders" with a few huzzahs. How much of sincerity or of devotion to the Union was in this demonstration, the action of the Federals shows they were competent to judge. The sixth Ohio debarked, preceded by their band, who struck up the "Star Spangled Banner," followed by "Yankee Doodle," and the regiment immediately formed into line, marched to, and partially around the Public Square, and then up Cedar street to the Capitol, where Gen.

NELSON, in the name of the United States, took formal military possession of the capital of Tennessee, at forty-five minutes past eight o'clock, and at fifteen minutes past nine, the United States flag, after three attempts to run it up, was seen floating from the flag-staff on the Capitol, the flag of the Guthrie Greys having meantime been displayed from the cupola. As it was the first flag displayed from the capitol, and its color dark blue, those who viewed it from a distance regarded it as "warnings, and portents, and evils ominous," not knowing it was a mark of distinguished consideration accorded the Guthrie Greys by Gen. NELSON. The flag that floated from the flag-staff on the Capitol was a Nashville flag, and although it cannot be said of it,

"Of six preceding ancestors, that gem
Confer'd by testament to the sequent issue,
Hath it been owned and worn,"

it hath an unwritten history, which runneth that for six months it had been carefully hid away by a citizen who almost idolizes that flag—sewed in a comfort, we believe the story is, under which the old man rested his weary limbs when "civil night, the sober-suited matron, all in black, fills the wide vessel of the universe." At his request his was the first flag to float over the Capitol under the re-establishment of Federal rule.

While this was going on, the transports, to the number of twelve or fifteen, laden with infantry, cavalry, artillery, baggage, wagons, provisions, ammunition, and the *et ceteras* of an army, had taken position at the wharf and at various points along the river. The troops having debarked, marched to the Public Square, where the twenty-fourth, forty-first and fifty-first Ohio and the thirty-sixth Indiana remained nearly the whole of the day. Their bands entertained the "gaping crowds" that thronged the pavements to see the sights, with various military airs, when they finally struck up "Dixie," which drew down the crowd with enthusiastic shouts. Late in the afternoon they moved to the camping ground selected for them on the Southern confines of the city. Transports continued to arrive during the day, bringing additional troops, so that the number that had reached the city was computed at from ten to twelve thousand.

GREAT FRESHET IN THE CUMBERLAND.

The high tide in the river, the highest we have had since 1847,

enabled the largest class boats that navigate the Ohio to come up here in safety, and the water continued high for a considerable time. The high rise in the river caused some of our old citizens to refer to former freshets in the Cumberland at this point.

A great freshet occurred here in the year 1808, and again in 1826, both of which caused a great deal of suffering, and submerged many houses. A vast amount of wood, fencing and produce was swept away by the latter freshet, as well as a number of framed dwelling houses.

In 1842, another freshet occurred, and in March, 1847, there was another which was two feet higher than the rise in 1842, and five feet three inches lower than that of 1826. In December, 1847, there was still another freshet, which was the greatest that had occurred here since the settlement of the country by white men. The river rose that time *fifty feet* above low water mark, and was twenty inches higher than in the freshet of 1826. The water commenced rising on Thursday, the 17th of December, 1847, and continued to rise for upwards of a week, the weather being cold and snow falling alternately with rain. The water extended up Broad street to Messrs. PILCHER & PORTERFIELD's store, and covered the lower floor of that building. The front lower floor of Messrs. JOHNSON & SMITH's warehouse, corner of Broad and Market streets, was ten inches under water, while two steamboats were afloat within twenty feet of Messrs. YEATMAN & ARMSTEAD's (now GORDON's) warehouse. It was during this freshet that a steamboat in ascending the river, passed over the Gallatin pike beyond the old bridge. After the river commenced falling, three men in attempting to pass over to what is, now Edgefield, were washed on the pike fully a hundred yards from the bridge, and two of them were drowned.

A large amount of corn cribbed in the Cumberland bottoms for exportation, was shipped without bills of lading, being swept off without stock, fences and out-houses. The damage done by this freshet was immense. All the roads and approaches to Nashville were submerged except two. A good deal of distress among the poor of this city followed this freshet, and the Mayor (ALEX. ALLISON) and Aldermen were kept busy alleviating the suffering and homeless people. When it is stated that more than one hundred families were compelled to leave their homes, and to seek

refuge wherever they could, the reader can form some idea of the suffering that resulted from this memorable freshet.

Several high rises in the Cumberland have occurred at different periods since, but none that would at all compare with that of December, 1847. The recent freshet, although the bridges in Front, Market and Cherry streets were submerged, was not near so disastrous as that of 1847. The destruction of property during the recent rise was comparatively small.

INTERVIEW WITH GEN. BUELL—PROCLAMATION BY THE MAYOR—
GENERAL ORDER.

Generals BUELL and MITCHELL arrived in Edgefield Monday evening, when the former notified the Mayor that he would be pleased to receive a call from him Tuesday morning at eleven o'clock. It had been previously arranged by the City Council that Mayor CHEATHAM and a committee of citizens, consisting of Messrs. JAMES WOODS, R. C. FOSTER, 1ST, RUSSELL HOUSTON, WM. B. LEWIS, JOHN M. LEA, JOHN S. BRIEN, JAMES WHITWORTH, N. HOBSON, JOHN HUGH SMITH, and JOHN M. BASS, should meet the commanding General, make a formal surrender of the city to him, and negotiate for the best terms they could in regard to the protection of the property and rights of the citizens. At the appointed hour the Mayor and committee crossed the river in the steamer C. E. Hillman, which had been placed at their disposal, where they were met by Generals NELSON and MITCHELL, by whom they were escorted to Gen. BUELL's headquarters. What transpired at this meeting of the representatives of the conquerors and the conquered, remains, and is likely to remain, a portion of the unwritten history of the war. Gen. BUELL was solicited, as we understand, to issue a proclamation to the people defining the policy of his government, but he declined, assigning as a reason, that he preferred to let his acts speak for themselves. Mayor CHEATHAM issued the following proclamation the day succeeding the interview:

PROCLAMATION.

The Committee representing the City Authorities and the people have discharged their duty by calling on Gen. Buell, at his headquarters, in Edgefield, on yesterday. The interview was perfectly satisfactory to the Committee, and there is every assurance of safety and protection to the people, both in their persons and in their property. I therefore respectfully request that business be resumed, and all our citizens, of every trade and profession, pursue their regular vocations.

The County Elections will take place on the regular day, and all civil business be conducted as heretofore; and the Commanding General assures me that I can rely upon his aid in enforcing our Police Regulations. One branch of business is intensified—the sale or giving away of intoxicating liquors. I shall not hesitate to invoke the aid of Gen. Buell in case the recent laws upon this subject are violated.*

I most earnestly call upon the people of the surrounding country, who are inside of the Federal lines, to resume their commerce with the city, and bring in their market supplies, especially wheat, butter and eggs, assuring them that they will be fully protected and amply remunerated.

R. B. CHEATHAM, Mayor.

February 26, 1862.

Subsequently, (on the 5th of March,) Gen. BUELL published the following general order, which it will be seen, bears the same date as Mayor CHEATHAM'S proclamation:

GENERAL ORDER—NO. 13A.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE OHIO,
NASHVILLE, TENN., February 26, 1862.

The General Commanding congratulates his troops that it has been their privilege to restore the national banner to the Capital of Tennessee. He believes that thousands of hearts in every part of the State will swell with joy to see that honored flag reinstated in a position from which it was removed in the excitement and folly of an evil hour; that the voice of her own people will soon proclaim its welcome, and that their manhood and patriotism will protect and perpetuate it.

The General does not deem it necessary, though the occasion is a fit one, to remind his troops of the rule of conduct they have hitherto observed and are still to pursue. We are in arms not for the purpose of invading the rights of our fellow-countrymen anywhere, but to maintain the integrity of the Union, and protect the Constitution under which its people have been prosperous and happy. We cannot therefore look with indifference on any conduct which is designed to give aid and comfort to those who are endeavoring to defeat these objects; but the action to be taken in such cases rests with certain authorized persons, and is not to be assumed by individual officers or soldiers. Peaceable citizens are not to be molested in their persons or property. Any wrongs to either are to be promptly corrected and the offenders brought to punishment. To this end all persons are desired to make complaint to the immediate commander of officers or soldiers so offending, and if justice be not done promptly, then to the next commander, and so on until the wrong is redressed. If the necessities of the public service should require the use of private property for public purposes, fair compensation is to

*The following is the law to which the Mayor referred:

AN ACT TO PROTECT THE PEACE AND QUIET OF THE CITY OF NASHVILLE.

SECTION 1. Be it enacted by the City Council of Nashville, That it shall hereafter be unlawful for any person to sell or give away any intoxicating liquors except for medicinal purposes, and then only upon the written prescription of some one of the physicians appointed by the Mayor, which prescription shall state specifically the quantity needed. Any person violating the provisions of this act shall be fined for each offence, not less than twenty five nor more than fifty dollars, besides suffering a forfeiture of his, her, or their liquor.

SECTION 2. Any person found on the streets, lanes, alleys, or other public places within the city, shall be fined not less than twenty five nor more than fifty dollars, and shall, upon oath, declare the name or names of those furnishing him or her the liquors upon which he or she became intoxicated, who shall be arrested and tried upon such information; and upon a failure to make such discovery, the party refusing shall be fined twenty five dollars and be confined in the Work House until such discovery is made by them. This act to take effect from its passage.

Approved, Feb. 24, 1862.

be allowed. No such appropriation of private property is to be made except by the authority of the highest commander present, and any other officer or soldier who shall presume to exercise such privilege shall be brought to trial. Soldiers are forbidden to enter the residences or grounds of citizens on any plea without authority.

No arrests are to be made without the authority of the Commanding General, except in cases of actual offence against the authority of the Government; and in all such cases the fact and circumstances will immediately be reported in writing to Headquarters through the intermediate commanders.

The General reminds his officers that the most frequent depredations are those which are committed by worthless characters who straggle from the ranks on the plea of being unable to march; and where the inability really exists, it will be found in most instances that the soldier has overindulged himself with useless and unauthorized articles. The orders already published on this subject must be enforced.

The condition and behavior of a corps are sure indications of the efficiency and fitness of its officers. If any regiment shall be found to disregard that propriety of conduct which belongs to soldiers as well as citizens, they must not expect to occupy the posts of honor, but may rest assured that they will be placed in positions where they cannot bring shame on their comrades and the cause they are engaged in. The Government supplies with liberality all the wants of the soldier. The occasional deprivations and hardships incident to rapid marches must be borne with patience and fortitude. Any officer who neglects to provide properly for his troops, or separates himself from them to seek his own comfort, will be held to a rigid accountability.

By command of GENERAL BUELL.

JAMES B. FRY, A. A. G., Chief of Staff.

Official: J. M. WILSON, A. A. G.

INCIDENTS.

Thus, after ten days, and they were days of much anxiety to many, were we turned over to the Federal authorities. The agony was over, and so far nothing had occurred which seemed to justify the course of those who had so frantically torn themselves from their homes when the news of the reverse to the Confederate arms at Fort Donelson reached here.

A flag was here and there displayed, but we could learn of only four or five, and strangely enough, these seemed to excite in the Federals more of contempt than admiration. They seemed to think, and indeed, some of them are reported to have said, a man's patriotism was not to be measured by the amount of bunting he might display. An old lady who had clung to the Union with the devotion

which a mother clings to her child, and had kept the stars and stripes flying over her mansion long after the State had withdrawn from the Union, was met by a rebel, who asked why she did not have her flag out. Her reply was, she had taken it down in deference to public sentiment, and that now she would not flaunt it in the face of her neighbors to taunt them with what they perhaps regarded a misfortune.

While the Federal troops were being landed, quite a number of Capt. MORGAN'S scouts were passing about through the city taking a survey of matters. One of them, more curious perhaps than the rest, dashed down to the Lower Landing to get a peep at the gunboat, and before he was aware that any of them had come ashore, the band, almost under his horse's nose, struck up "Yankee Doodle." Although his presence was perhaps unknown, he wheeled and retraced his steps as fast as his fleet steed could carry him, for the Federals,

"Like a brace of greyhounds,
Having the fearful flying hare in sight,
With fiery eyes, sparkling for very wrath,
And bloody steel, grasp'd in their ireful hands,
Were at his back."

The Federal authorities took charge of the Confederate stores which had been left, and it is said they were of considerable value. We have heard the value estimated at from \$1,000,000 to \$3,000,000. Much of the pork and beef has since spoiled, but still there was a large amount that was good. Some cotton, perhaps two or three hundred bales, fell into the hands of the Federals. The greater portion of this cotton was used at Fort Zollicoffer, in preparing that fortification.

The distribution of provisions by order of the Confederate authorities was most fortunate for the people of Nashville, as our market supplies were almost wholly cut off for weeks, the little that was brought in having commanded exorbitant prices. But for the stores thus distributed, there would undoubtedly have been much suffering among the people, a large portion of whom were thrown out of employment.

The occupation of Nashville by the Federals was a bloodless achievement, but it forms a memorable epoch in the history of the

war. The panic that preceded it we have but faintly portrayed. It was rich in scenes which would have admirably illustrated the pages of *Punch* or *Vanity Fair*. But these have probably been lost to history, or only preserved in the memory of those who passed through the Great Panic.

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