

WASHINGTON NEWS.

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WASHINGTON, Tuesday, May 22.

THE HEALTH OF JEFFERSON DAVIS.

It will be recollected that, some two weeks ago, Secretary McColloch, whilst on a visit to Fortress Monroe, had an interview with JEFF. DAVIS, and that the Secretary discovered from observation and the information he derived from the surgeon in attendance at the fort that Mr. DAVIS was in feeble health. Since the report of that fact there have been various statements to the contrary coming from newspaper correspondents, who professed to have obtained their information from the officers and visitors at the fort. The President deemed it proper, upon the suggestion of several prominent men to direct an official report to be made by the Surgeon who has charge of the prisoner. The examination was made accordingly, and the following is a copy of the Surgeon's statement:

FORTRESS MONROE, Va; May 9, 1866.

Adjutant-General United States Army, Washington, D. C.:

SIR: In compliance with directions from the President of the United States to me, given through the office of the Adjutant-General, I have made a special examination of State prisoner JEFFERSON DAVIS, now in confinement at this post and report, the following to be the result of said examination: He is considerably emaciated, the fatty tissue having almost disappeared, leaving his skin much shriveled. His muscles are small, flaccid, and very soft, and he has but little muscular strength. He is quite weak and debilitated. Consequently his gait is becoming uneven and irregular. His digestive organs at present are in comparatively good condition, but become quickly deranged under anything but the most carefully prepared food. With a diet disagreeing with him dyspeptic symptoms promptly make their appearance, soon followed by vertigo, severe facial and cranial neuralgia, an erysipelatous inflammation of the posterior scalp and right side of nose, which quickly affects the right eye, the only sound one he now has, and extends through the nasal duct into the interior nose. His nervous system is greatly deranged, being much prostrated and excessively irritable. Slight noises, which are scarcely perceptible to a man in robust health, cause him much pain, the description of the sensation being as of one flayed and having every sentient nerve exposed to the waves of sound. Want of sleep has been a great and almost the principal cause of his nervous excitability. This has been produced by the tramp of the creaking boots of the sentinels on post round the prison room and the reliefs of the guard at the expiration of every two hours, which almost invariably weakens him. Prisoner DAVIS states that he has scarcely enjoyed over two hours of sleep unbroken at on time since his confinement. Means have been taken, by placing matting on the floors for the sentinel to walk on, to alleviate this, a source of disturbance, but with only partial success. His vital condition is low, and he has but little recuperative force. Should he be attacked by any of the severe forms of disease to which the tide water region of Virginia is subject, I, with reason, fear for the result. A copy of this report I have furnished to the Headquarters of the Military District of Fortress Monroe, in compliance with orders from the Major-General Commanding. Respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEO. E. COOPER, Surgeon U. S. A.

THE BOMBARDMENT OF CALLAO—DISPATCHES FROM

COMMODORE RODGERS.

The following dispatches from Commodore RODGERS were received to-day at the Navy Department:

UNITED STATES STEAMSHIP VANDERBILT, }

AT SEA, May 10, 1866. }

SIR: I have the honor to report that on the 27th of April the Spanish Admiral MENDEZ NUNEZ addressed a letter to the Diplomatic Corps in Lima declaring that the Port of Callao was blockaded from that date. Also, another justifying the course of Spain and announcing that he should give neutral inhabitants four days to remove their persons and property previous to the bombardment of the city on the 20th of April. Admiral PEARSON anchored our men-of-war out of gun shot of the fortifications of Callao. Merchant vessels had some days before taken up positions out of the way of hostile operations. It was thought that the attack would commence on the 1st of May, when the time expired given to neutrals for removal; but on the 2d of May, about 10 o'clock A. M., the Spanish fleet got under weigh. Some time was spent in dressing their lines, and about 11 o'clock the squadron moved in two directions, under Admiral NUNEZ, consisting of the iron-clad "Numancia," of 7,000 tons burthen, with the frigates "Blanca" and "Resolution," moved along the San Carenzo Island to attack the batteries on the south side of Callao; while while the frigates "Villa de Madrid," "Berenguela" and "Almanza," passing in front of the national and merchant vessels anchored in the bay, steamed at first slowly towards the Peruvian batteries on the north side of the city. As these vessels approached they accelerated their speed, and ran swiftly into position. At 12:45 the first gun was fired, I thought from the "Numancia," quickly followed by two from a battery on the south side. The Spanish fleet carried about 240 guns, mostly 32-pounders. The "Numancia" was armed with 68-pounders, as was also the three-gun corvette "Inicudora," which was held in reserve to cover if necessary, and also, I presume, to cover the batteries.

The Peruvian batteries numbered in the aggregate 45 guns, five of them 450-pounders, (Blakley,) and four Armstrong guns, 300-pounders, mounted on the top of iron turrets. The rest were thirty-two-pounders. Sand-bags were extensively used in making the battery, to which were added brick masonry and some of adobe. The firing soon became of a warm character. About 10 o'clock the Villa de Madrid set her jib and try-sails, and ran out of the fight. She made signals, and was taken in tow by the Vincadora, with steam escaping abundantly below. She was soon followed by the Bevenjuda, listed over to one side, and with smoke pouring from her ports. Just before she retired, a puff of black dust had shot out at her water-line on the side away from the battery. A ball had gone through her coal bunkers, I thought, and through both sides. We saw men over the side attempting to protect with canvass the ragged hole which seemed some two feet square.

The "Almanza" moved to join the first division, engaged with the southern batteries. The "Resolution" and "Blanca Blanca," at about 2:30 steamed away from the southern division leaving the "Almanza" and the "Numancia" still engaged. These vessels drew off at fifteen minutes before 5 o'clock, the Peruvians firing after them as long as their guns could reach them. The actions brought under way by the Spaniards was now urged on both sides with courage and persistency. The Peruvian guns, which were all *en barbette*, never ceased firing, and the Spaniards, I believe, only left off when their ammunition was exhausted. The killed and wounded in the batteries were said to number eighty. In one of the iron-clad batteries a shell exploded, igniting other powder and disabling the guns. By this explosion Señor GALVEZ, the Peruvian Minister of War and Marine, was blown to atoms. Next to the Dictator in power, of liberal views and marked ability, his loss will prove a serious one to the country. His Excellency, the Dictator, is said to have been everywhere in the thickest of the fight, animating, encouraging and directing the Peruvian batteries. I do not know the damage done to the Spanish fleet, but the loss was no doubt heavy. It was obvious that several of the vessels

had been badly punished. The Spaniards we thought did not go very near the batteries, many of their shots falling into the water. The presence of torpedoes may have inspired caution. In coming away from a formal visit Admiral PEARSONS picked up one floating adrift near our vessels. It was a red peg, containing about 60 pounds of wet powder, with some yards of insulated wire attached inside to the arrangement, for explosion by a galvanic battery. The senior Surgeon, Dr. PECK, was sent to the Villa de Madrid and Berenguela, as soon as they anchored, with offers of assistance. His services were accepted by the Surgeon of the Villa de Madrid; but on board the Berenguela the officers gathered around him at the gangway and said they were deeply grateful, but needed no help. When the Numancia anchored, Dr. JOHNSON was sent on board, while Dr. PECK, who had returned to the Vanderbilt, went on shore to tender his services to the Peruvians. I was sorry to learn through Dr. JOHNSON that Admiral NUNEZ had been badly wounded by splinters, no fewer than eight injuries having been received in the head, arms, legs and side. The Doctor was not permitted to see the Admiral, and I apprehend he has been seriously hurt.

The Peruvian batteries were but little injured. The authorities on shore were confident on the morning following the bombardment, they would be better prepared than at the first to resist an attack. There were two iron-clad vessels on the side of the Peruvians—one, the monitor the *Loa*, with a single gun, a 68-pounder, in a turret, and one, the *Villoria*, built in the shape of the Confederate iron-clads, covered with railroad iron and having a sixty-eight pounder at each end. The Monitor was struck ten times, but received no damage. I do not know how the other fared. There were several small men-of-war, but their artillery was too light to be used, and they were secured in the Mole.

I have the honor to be, your obedient servant,

JOHN RODGERS, Commander.

To Hon. GIDEON WELLS, Secretary of the Navy.

Appended to the above report is a finely executed map of the bombardment of Callao, showing the movements of the Spanish squadron and the position of the Peruvian batteries, the design being the work of Lieut. GOWN K. HASKELL, U. S. N.

REPORTED CATTLE PLAGUE ON THE ISTHMUS.

The Inspector of Customs at Panama reports to the Treasury Department, under date of May 13, 1866, in reference to the disease among the cattle which has broken out on the Isthmus, and which was reported to be the rinderpest. Having given the matter a thorough investigation, he is confident that nothing like the cattle plague has yet appeared in those countries. The disease prevailing there, he says, is the usual distemper caused in the dry season by the cattle feeding too freely on the young grass which springs up after the first rains, and is not contagious.

PARDONS TO CRIMINAL OFFENDERS.

The President of the United States has granted pardons to the following persons, held for criminal offences: CHARLES E. MOULD, of Illinois, now under arrest for stealing letters from the post-office at Chicago; GEORGE COATES, of New-York, convicted of smuggling, and sentenced to thirty days' confinement and to pay a fine of \$100; and JAMES W. BOWLING, of New-York, also convicted of smuggling, and sentenced to pay a fine of \$100 and be imprisoned for sixty days. COATES and BOWLING having served out their periods of confinement, and being unable to pay the fines imposed upon them, they were pardoned on the recommendations of many respectable citizens of New-York.

The President yesterday granted a pardon to B. PALMER, of Murfreesboro, Tenn., formerly a Brigadier-General in the rebel army, on the strongest recommendations.

GENERAL ORDER NO. 114 RESCINDED.

General Order No. 114, dated War Department, Adjutant-General's Office, Washington, Aug. 21, 1862, prohibiting officers on leave of absence from visiting Washington without special permission, is rescinded. The attention of all officers arriving at the seat of Government is directed to the regulation requiring them to report at the office of the Adjutant-General, and record their names and residences in the city.

THE ANNUAL EXAMINATION AT WEST POINT.

The President has appointed the following-named persons to be visitors at the approaching examination at the United States Military Academy at West Point, commencing on the first Monday in June: For the State of Vermont, Rev. John Newman; Rhode Island, Thos. G. Turner, of Providence; New-Jersey, Gen. L. Perine, of Trenton; Pennsylvania, Wm. F. Johnson, of Pittsburgh; Delaware, Wm. B. Macaulay, Jr., of Wilmington; Virginia, Hon. B. J. Barbour; Florida, Hon. Wm. Marion; Mississippi and Arkansas, Hon. Josiah Snow; Texas, Maj. Anson L. Mills, of Washington; Missouri, Gen. J. Stevenson; Tennessee, Judge S. J. W. Luckey; Kentucky, Judge Embree; Indiana, J. L. Campbell; Illinois, Dr. Jos. M. Kalston, of Quincy; Wisconsin, John G. McMyun; Kansas, Col. John P. Martin, of Atchison; Oregon, Hon. J. W. Nesmith. The persons appointed will report themselves to Brevet Maj.-Gen. CULLUM on their arrival at West Point.

THE BANKRUPT BILL.

The following is a summary of the Bankrupt Law as it passed:

The 1st section constitutes the District Courts of the United States Courts of Bankruptcy.

The 2d section gives the United States Circuit Courts general superintendence and jurisdiction of all cases and questions arising under the Act.

Sections 3 to 7, inclusive, relate to the administration of the law in Courts of Bankruptcy.

Sections 8, 9 and 10 refer to appeals and practice.

The 11th section provides that if any person residing within the jurisdiction of the United States, owing debts over three hundred dollars, shall apply by petition to the Judge of his Judicial District, setting out his inability to pay his debts in full, and his willingness to surrender his estate for the benefit of his creditors,—the filing of such petition shall be an act of bankruptcy, and such petitioner shall be adjudged a bankrupt. A warrant shall then be issued by the Judge directing the Marshal of the district to take possession of the estate and keep the same until the appointment of an assignee. Notice is then to be given to the creditors to hold a meeting and choose one or more assignees.

Section 12 to 18 inclusive, define, in great detail, the duties of assignees.

The sections 19 to 24 inclusive, relate to debts and proof of claims.

Section 25 provides for the sale of perishable property.

Section 26 provides for the examination of bankrupts before the Court and exempts them from liability to arrest during the pendency of the proceedings in bankruptcy in civil actions.

Section 27 relates to the distribution of the bankrupt's estate. All creditors whose debts are duly proved and allowed are to be entitled to share in the bankrupt property pro rata without any priority or preference whatever, except that wages due from him to any operative, clerk or house servant to an amount not exceeding fifty dollars for labor performed within six months next preceding the adjudication of bankruptcy shall be entitled to priority and shall be first paid in full. In the order for a dividend the following claims are to be entitled to priority of preference and to be first paid in full in the following order:

1. Fees, costs and expenses of suits, and for the custody of property.

2. All debts due to the United States, and all taxes and assessments under the laws thereof.

3. All debts due to the State in which the proceedings in bankruptcy are pending, and all taxes and assessments made under the laws of such State.

4. Wages due to any operative, clerk or house servant to an amount not exceeding \$50 for labor performed within six months next preceding the first publication of the notice of proceedings in bankruptcy.

5. All debts due to any person who, by the laws of the United States, are or may be entitled to a priority or preference in like manner as if this act had not been passed. Always provided that nothing contained in the act shall interfere with the assessment and collection of taxes by the United States or any State.

Section 29 and the five following sections, relate to the bankruptcy discharge and its effects. If it shall appear to the Court that the bankrupt has in all things conformed to his duty under this act, and that he is entitled under the provisions thereof to receive a discharge, the Court shall grant him a discharge from all his duties except as hereinafter provided, and shall give him a certificate thereof under the seal of the Court.

Section 35 declares preferences and fraudulent conveyances void.

Sections 36, 37 and 38 relate to bankruptcy of partnerships and corporations and to dates and depositions.

Sections 39 to 42 inclusive, provide for the case of involuntary bankruptcy; a departure from the State, avoiding the service of legal process, removal or concealment of property, fraudulent assignment of property, arrest and detention for debt for a period of seven days, confession of judgment, or suspension of payment of commercial paper for fourteen days, shall be deemed an act of bankruptcy.

Section 43 provides for the superceding of the bankrupt proceedings by arrangement.

Section 44 provides penalties against bankrupts for concealment of property, falsifying books or papers, fraudulent assignment or conveyance of property, spending in gaming, permitting a fictitious debt to be proved against him, obtaining goods on credit fraudulently within three months of the commencement of the proceedings in bankruptcy; these are to be deemed misdemeanors, and punished by imprisonment, with or without hard labor, for a term not exceeding three years.

Sections 45 and 46 provide penalties against officers in administering the law.

Section 47 regulates fees and costs.

Section 48 regulates stamp duties on petitions, warrants, &c.

Sections 49 and 50 define the meaning of terms and computation of time.

Section 51 and last enacts that this act shall commence and take effect as to the appointment of the officers created hereby, and the promulgation of rules and general orders, from and after the date of its approval; provided that no petition or other proceeding under this act shall be filed, received or commenced before the 1st day of November, 1866.