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EDGAR SNOWDEN, JR.
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GENERAL NEWS.

The number of slaves for whose value petitions have been put in before the emancipation commissioners at Washington, is now 1,970, from 585 claimants. The appropriation by Congress was on the basis of 3,000 slaves, which, at an average of \$300 for each, would absorb \$900,000 of the one million appropriation, the other \$100,000 being intended for colonization of those who may desire it. Some of the applications are from citizens of Maryland who owned slaves who were hired in the District, and thus held to "service or labor" there.—Claims are also put in by owners who reside in Washington, and had slaves temporarily hired in Maryland, as well as by some whose slaves had absconded into Maryland. It will be for the commissioners to determine, in regard to these peculiar classes of claims, which shall be allowed and which not.

The New York Journal of Commerce, of Saturday, says of financial matters in that city on Friday, "there has been more activity today in both commercial and financial circles.—Money is freely offered, but there is a little better demand. Foreign exchange is easier, owing in part to the news from New Orleans, and sterling 60 day bills can be bought at 114½. The stock market opened strongly for governments, and was well supported."

Speaking of the "contrabands" in Washington, the Star says: "Persons wishing to make use of their services, can procure them by proving to the superintendent, Mr. Duvall, that they are loyal persons, after which they can select such as think will suit them. The number is constantly on the increase, those leaving per day averaging fourteen, while those coming in average twenty, while on an average one a week is born to the community in the building."

The New York World says it was the general impression among the troops who recently left New York for Washington that they would not be detained in service longer than three months.

The claimant of the female slave recently arrested from Marshal Lamon by the military authorities, is about entering a suit for the recovery of the value of the woman.

Although the stock market in Baltimore, last week opened with quite a panic feeling, yet prices generally recovered from the depression and quite a fair business was done.

An application has been made to the U. S. Congress for compensation for a slave "belonging to a loyal citizen of Maryland, taken out of the State in April by U. S. troops."

The mammoth steamship Great Eastern sailed from New York yesterday for Liverpool, with three hundred and eighty-five cabin passengers, and three hundred and sixty three in the steerage.

Franklin, Pendleton county, eighty miles south of New Creek was, up to Saturday, May 24, the headquarters of General Fremont. It is distant twenty-four miles from Monterey, and sixty-five from Staunton, and is on the same line of latitude with New Market, Gen. Banks's former headquarters, in the adjoining valley. In the evening, General Fremont received an order to retire, for the purpose of relieving General Banks, and on the next morning, May 25, was on the move with his whole force, 20,000 men, in the direction of Moorefield.

The Confederate privateersmen have been sent to Fortress Monroe, and it is presumed will be at once sent South. Five hundred and forty-one Confederate prisoners, captured at the battle of Hanover Court House, have arrived at the Fortress. On Friday, a person was captured on board the steamer running from the Fortress to Norfolk, who had in his possession nearly one hundred letters addressed to parties in the South.

The U. S. Secretary of the Treasury, in response to a call of the House, will soon present a statement of the registered and floating public debt. The chairman of the Senate finance committee estimates the debt on the first of July to amount to seven hundred and twenty millions. The last official conjecture of the duration of the war appears in a telegram from the War Department to Governor Andrew, of the 27th May. "Practically," the Secretary thinks, "the war will not last longer than a year." Another conjecture from a high source, defers peace for five years.

The explanation of the detention of the Canada by Lord Lyons, in order to put his despatches on board, is this: He is in the habit of sending his despatches by every Cunard steamer, forwarding them by a courier, who leaves at the last moment in order to take the latest official news. The railroads having been seized by the Government on Monday, he was unable to send his despatches until Tuesday; hence the delay. They doubtless contained some account of the disaster to General Banks, and the consequent panic at Washington.

An intercepted letter from Judge Rost, in Paris, to Mr. Yancey, is published, in which he speaks of there being no chance of an intervention by France and England in American affairs, and says that the recent successes of the Federal arms in the South and West have done great injury to the Southern cause.

On Friday night there was a violent thunder gust at Old Point, one of the heaviest known there for years. The rain fell in torrents.—During the gust one of the government stables at Fortress Monroe was struck by lightning, set on fire and consumed, with three horses.—The other stables were in great danger, but were saved without damage.

Numbers of Mormon emigrants are arriving at New York from Liverpool.

Clarke county, Va., has lost two-thirds of its slave population, and those who profess to know, say that not one-half of the wheat can be harvested this season; and so in Jefferson and Frederick, though not to the same extent.

A Union meeting was held in Norfolk last Saturday night. Mr. Segar made a speech, and great enthusiasm prevailed, cheers being given for the stars and stripes. The meeting was arranged on short notice. More extensive demonstrations will be made in a few days.

The capture of three Confederate prize vessels, containing valuable cargoes, is announced. Two of them were taken off Charleston, while attempting to run the blockade, and the other off Mobile.

Gen. Butler, in New Orleans, has issued an order that the Banks in that city shall make payments in specie or U. S. treasury notes, and that the issuers of "shinplasters shall redeem them or be punished."

The Louisville papers announce the fact that the tobacco trade of that city is increasing rapidly. The sales of one day recently were larger than ever before.

Intelligence from Mexico, received by telegraph from California, states that the French troops, after some fighting, had commenced retreating from before Puebla.

The U. S. Secretary of War has directed that the militia regiments from the North, recently ordered to Washington, are not to be detained longer than three months.

The men who were captured on board the steamer Ella Warley have been liberated, upon making oath that they were citizens of foreign governments.

The steamer Cossack has arrived at New York from Newbern, North Carolina, with four hundred and eighteen released Union prisoners.

Gen. Dix has been transferred from the command at Baltimore to the command at Fortress Monroe—and Gen. Wool is ordered to Baltimore where he succeeds Gen. D.

An order has been issued by one of the Federal commanding generals of Missouri, ordering all guerillas taken prisoners to be immediately shot.

The Lynchburg Virginian reports an affair in Giles county, Va., in which it is said a large number of Federal prisoners were captured, and a number of guns and munitions of war taken. Gens. Heth and Marshall were the Confederate commanders.

The Circuit Court of Prince George's County, Md., as a Court of Equity, met at Marlboro' to-day.

The N. Y. World declares that "Gen. Butler's management of New Orleans is as good as a play."

The light boat at Smith's Point has been reinstated in its former position.