

## CHANGE OF MAIL DAY.

With a view of presenting the latest intelligence from the seat of war, we shall hereafter mail the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN on Friday instead of Tuesday. By this change the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN will have as late war news as any other weekly paper.

It is the intention of the publishers to keep up with the times, in news and in illustrations of new inventions pertaining to warfare, and at the same time, illustrate and describe all new inventions and discoveries which may be considered important in any department of mechanics or science. The publishers trust that all subscribers whose term for which they prepaid are about expiring, will renew their subscriptions.

## THE WAR.

The 24th of May, 1861, is a date which will occupy a prominent position in the history of the United States; for on this day the government made its first step in advance to put down the disunion party that is seeking by force of arms to break up and destroy the nation. Thirteen thousand troops were sent from Washington and its vicinity across the Potomac river into Virginia. The advance was made in the latter part of the night of the 23d and 24th at three points; from Georgetown, across what is known as the chain bridge at the mouth of the Potomac Aqueduct; from Washington across the Long Bridge; and down the river by steamboat to Alexandria, which is a small town about six miles below Washington, on the right bank of the Potomac.

## THE CROSSING FROM GEORGETOWN.

The New York Sixty-ninth and Twenty-eighth regiments, with Lieutenant Drummond's cavalry and a battery passed the Chain Bridge about midnight. They took possession of Arlington Heights, where they have since thrown up intrenchments.

## THE CROSSING AT LONG BRIDGE.

The main body crossed at the Long Bridge. It consisted of about 8,000 infantry, with two companies of cavalry of the regular army, and Sherman's flying artillery. The scene is described as novel and impressive in the extreme. It was as beautiful a night as ever was seen, the air was still, the sky was cloudless and the moon at the full, and in the latitude of Washington, the latter part of May is the pleasantest season of the year. As the troops crossed, the Michigan regiment and Sherman's artillery turned down to the left for Alexandria, while most of the others turned up the river to the right, to occupy the heights opposite Washington.

## TAKING OF ALEXANDRIA.

At two o'clock in the morning, Commander Dahlgren appeared at the camp of Colonel Ellsworth's regiment of Zouaves, and informed them that it was time to move. They immediately embarked on board the steamboats *Baltimore* and *Mount Vernon*, and were carried slowly down the river to Alexandria, where they arrived at half-past five o'clock. They immediately landed, formed in double quick time, and marched up into the town, meeting with no resistance. It seems that the commander of the *Pawnee* had sent a flag of truce into the town a short time before, giving the secession forces an hour to leave. They had accordingly prepared a train of cars and steamed away as our troops entered the place. As the Michigan regiment, however, came in with the artillery, they caught 36 members of a cavalry company, dressed in very gay uniforms, with plumes in their caps. These gentlemen, when first called on to surrender, demanded time for consideration, but as the battery thundered up and wheeled into position, they concluded to surrender at discretion. They were taken to Washington, and confined in the navy yard, where their short and grum answers excited considerable mirth.

## THE DEATH OF COLONEL ELLSWORTH.

On landing, Col. Ellsworth, the commander of the Zouaves, after giving some hasty directions to destroy the railroad track, started for the telegraph office to cut the wires leading to the South. At first he was accompanied only by the military secretary of the regiment, Mr. H. J. Winser; the chaplain, Rev. E. W. Dodge, and the reporter of the *New York Tribune*;

but he stopped and called forward a single squad, with a sergeant from the first company. The party proceeded quickly through the streets, meeting a few bewildered citizens who had just risen in the early morning, and were about to turn towards the telegraph office, when the colonel caught sight of a large secession flag on the Marshall House, a second class inn, though the principal one of the village. This is the identical flag which has so long been waving in sight of the White House at Washington, and has been the subject of much comment. Some ten days previously, Senator Wade, of Ohio, looking at it through a telescope from the White House, remarked to the President that it was provoking to see it so near the capital. As Colonel Ellsworth saw it on the hotel he observed, "It must come down," and, sending back the sergeant for the entire first company, he turned towards the hotel. At the open door he met a man in his shirt and trousers, of whom he demanded what sort of flag it was that hung above the roof. The man, who seemed much alarmed, replied that he knew nothing of it; and that he was only a boarder there. Without further words, the colonel sprang up the staircase, followed by his company, six in all besides himself. When they reached the attic, Colonel Ellsworth took Mr. Winser's knife, and, clambering up a ladder to the roof, cut down the flag and brought it down under his arm. The party then descended, private Brownell leading the way and the colonel next. As they descended the stairs to the second story, a man, who proved to be the landlord of the hotel, by the name of Jackson, rushed out of a dark passage with a double barreled gun in his hand, and, scarcely observing Brownell, presented his gun square at the breast of the colonel, who was on the stairs within two or three steps of the bottom. Brownell made a quick motion to turn the weapon aside, but the fellow's hand was firm, and he discharged the gun straight to its aim, sending the contents directly into Colonel Ellsworth's breast, who fell forward upon his face, with the dull, heavy sound of a lifeless corpse. The assassin then instantly turned upon Brownell to shoot him with the other barrel, but the Zouave was too quick for him. Though the sound of their guns seemed to those present to be simultaneous, there must have been a fraction of a second in favor of the Zouave, for the ball from his rifle struck Jackson at the bridge of the nose, passing through his head, while the contents of Jackson's gun passed just over Brownell's head and entered the panel of a door behind him. Brownell, not knowing the fatal character of his shot, instantly drove his sabre bayonet through Jackson's falling body, the force of the blow sending the body down the upper section of the second flight of stairs, where it lay upon the face with the gun firmly clasped under it. On turning over the body to remove the gun the face was exposed, displaying a wound too horrible for description, and exhibiting the features fixed in an expression of the most deadly rage and hate. The countenance of the young colonel, on the other hand, was perfectly serene, and, except for the palor that comes with death, was as natural as in sleep. The surgeon of the regiment soon arrived, and, a litter of muskets being arranged, the body was carried to the steamboat and taken to Washington.

## THE GRIEF FOR COLONEL ELLSWORTH.

Elmer E. Ellsworth, the young soldier who was thus suddenly cut off, was 24 years of age. He was born in Mechanicsville, in this State; was employed for a time in one of the large mercantile establishments in this city, and then went to Illinois, where he organized the famous company of Chicago Zouaves, who attracted so much attention on their visit to New York last summer. Mr. Ellsworth studied law for a time at Springfield, Ill., in the office of Abraham Lincoln, now President of the United States; and when the President went from Springfield to Washington, he was accompanied by his handsome student, whose graceful and manly bearing, and energetic attention to the comfort of the party, was the subject of much comment along the route. On the breaking out of the war he solicited permission to raise a regiment of zouaves among the firemen of New York, a service which he accomplished in one week. Many circumstances combined to cause very wide spread grief at the news of his death; he was extensively known among various classes and in many places; and then his youth, his accomplishments, his gallantry and the brilliancy of

his hopes were peculiarly calculated to impress all with sorrow at the suddenness of his departure. As the sad intelligence was flashed over the country, not only in his native town, but in Washington, in New York, and in many other places, flags were lowered to half mast, and all the usual signs of public mourning were manifested. The body was taken to Mechanicsville for interment, attended by magnificent funeral services on its way, both in Washington and in this city. The President of the United States and other public men formed a part of the procession that followed the body to the cars in Washington, and in New York the most prominent citizens were pall bearers, and it seemed as if all of the inhabitants turned out either to form a part of or to witness the procession. The body arrived in this city on Sunday morning, May 26th, where it was met by the parents; it lay in state in the City Hall from 11 to 1 o'clock, when it was borne through some of the principal streets to the steamboat *Francis Skiddy*, on which it moved up the North river toward its last resting place.

## BROWNELL THE AVENGER.

Among the guard of honor detailed to escort the remains of Colonel Ellsworth was the soldier who so swiftly avenged his death. He marched in the funeral procession in this city, with the captured secession flag fastened to the bayonet with which he slew the assassin of his commander. His name is Francis E. Brownell, he is from Troy, N. Y., and is about twenty years of age. Without the least swagger he walked with an air of unaffected grief, the object of the most absorbing interest to the countless thousands who watched the procession. As the word ran along the lines that Brownell was coming, every one seemed determined to get a glimpse of him, and the crowd surged in upon the lines, completely overpowering the police. The whole multitude seemed possessed with a strong and deep emotion, and all held their breath in hushed silence, fixing their eyes on the prompt avenger as he slowly passed along.

## THE REPORTED ATTACK ON THE STEAMER "BALTIMORE."

This report, in regard to the truth of which we intimated doubts in our last issue, proves to have been a heartless hoax. No such attack took place.

## FORTIFYING OPPOSITE WASHINGTON.

The troops which were sent into Virginia on the morning of Friday, May 24th, immediately commenced throwing up breastworks on the commanding positions, under the directions of the educated officers of our regular army. The work was busily prosecuted through Saturday and Sunday. The chaplain of one of the regiments, after conducting divine service on Sunday, shouldered a spade and led the way to the trenches.

A new military department has been formed by General Scott out of that portion of Virginia lying east of the Alleghanies and north of James river, exclusive of Fortress Monroe and vicinity, and Brigadier General McDowell has been appointed to its command. He is one of the most loyal, able and energetic officers of the army, and will certainly do credit to the important post of which he has just taken charge.

## REINFORCING THE ADVANCE.

Additional forces continue to be dispatched daily across the river, by the Long Bridge, while others are sent down by steamboat to Alexandria. It is said to be understood, however, that further advances upon Virginia soil will not be made by the army concentrated at Alexandria and on Arlington Heights, until the government has gathered sufficient forces to make simultaneous movements upon the secessionists from other points.

## GENERAL BUTLER'S OPERATIONS.

Major-General B. F. Butler has received the command of the military district of Eastern Virginia, embracing Fortress Monroe. The secessionists have erected batteries along the York and James rivers, which are powerfully armed with the guns taken from the Norfolk Navy Yard. Fortress Monroe is situated at the extremity of the peninsula formed by the rivers named, and Richmond, the capital of Virginia, is situated at the head of navigation on James river, 150 miles from its mouth, measured by the channel. General Butler is operating to clear the two rivers, and the strip of country between them of the secession forces, preparatory to an advance on Richmond, or as part of the plan for cutting off the communications with Norfolk, and retaking the Navy Yard at that place. On Monday, May 27th, General