

ELECTIONS TO BE HELD FOR THE GOVERNANCE OF IRON CITY

In light of the growing population and increasing industrial relevance of Iron City, it has been decided that the residents shall be granted a measure of self-governance, under the ministerial protections and guidance of the Lirian government. The military shall retain full authority provided under marshal law. However, many aspects of civil governance which fall beyond the bailiwick of the armed forces shall come under the oversight of popularly elected officials, as well as those already appointed to serve in the public interest. Elections for the following positions shall be conducted over the next several days: Health and Safety Commissioner, Justice of the Peace, Revenues Agent, as well as the five open seats on the newly formed City Council.

MANIACS ESCAPE IN RAILWAY ACCIDENT, STILL AT LARGE

A train carrying known lunatics, convicted madmen and other mentally unstable patients destined for the health facility being constructed in Lead Barrow has crashed. The details of the incident are poorly known, as nearly all the security, medical and engineering personnel were injured or incapacitated in the course of the disaster. As a result, a significant number of the insane are now suspected to be wandering the demesne of Iron City. Residents are recommended to treat these individuals with the utmost caution and report them to the authorities as soon as possible.

WAR TO REPULSE VENKESS INVADERS CONTINUES

The intensity of confrontations between Venkess and Lirian-led forces has lulled slightly in the most recent weeks as both sides prepare for the onset of the traditional fighting season. Venkestran forces have been severely battered by the Lirian winter offensive, but the early thaw of several key mountain passes over the Spine have allowed for the passage of men and materiel to reinforce the Venkess earlier than expected by Lirian strategists. Similarly, the clearing of roads and rail routes will soon enable



Dissection of a diseased body at the Lirian Royal Medical Academy, Department of Pathology.

Lirian forces to deploy experimental war machines powered by galvanic and steam vapor engines. Lord General Henry Pemberton has expressed continued optimism, asserting that the tide of war continues to swell in the favor of the civilized peoples of Talus. The foremost

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concern in the mind of the public and military experts continues to be for the welfare of the Acrian people, who are suffering greatly underneath the strain of

the conflict in their homeland. Commentators from both Liria and Acria have

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raised worries over the potential for a "razed earth" strategy on the part of the Venkess as they are forced back over the Spine.

MARAUDING XINGSOL THREATEN PEACE

A scandal has arisen over reports of alleged abduction and enslavement of

anyone and Ogwehoweh peoples by raiders based out of the Xingsol territories. Though the Xingsol are most well-known throughout Talus as being a scholarly and civil people, this image is largely a product of their very effective diplomatic and mercantile missions to

foreign nations. The Xingsol people of the central provinces are reputedly true to this type, being protected from violence by substantial geographic boundaries and the notably less civil outer provinces. It is in these outer provinces that all manner of flesh-trading and other forms of unsavory commerce are conducted for the enrichment of the Xingsol. The continuance of this vile business further elevates tensions between the Xingsol Empire and its neighboring powers, threatening even to invite organized military action.

PARLIAMENTARY DECLARATIONS REGARDING

THE NEWLY DISCOVERED CONTINENT

After prolonged debate and political jockeying, the five individuals who are to sit on the Board of Directors for the Lirian Overseas Colonial and Mercantile Company have been decided by Parliament. Full and exclusive colonial and trading rights have also been granted to the company with regard to all colonies established on the western continent. Registration lists have begun opening for Lirian citizens who wish to formally enlist as colonists.

Exchange Rates	
All prices in Queen's Oz.	
Alder (LA)	0.224
Emir (JE)	1.241
Emperor (XE)	0.009
Kaiser (DK)	0.075

Parliament has recently empowered judicial authorities with a new form of sentencing. Starting in the Fall, judges will be permitted to hand down punishments of "transportation," or indentured deportation to serve as colonialists on the new continent, at their discretion for all crimes coming before the court.

Iron City Threat Index,

a comprehensive and scientific measure of the city's hazard. Scaled 0 to 10.

This month's Threat Rating:

7.87

The threat rating has been elevated to reflect the sudden threat of violence and chaos from a number of sources, the foremost of which are the escaped lunatics. Furthermore, fragmented bands of Venkestra continue to threaten the residents of the region, in addition to the more commonplace dangers represented by Luen and mannequins.

Sicherheit, Part III

By Ernest Lawsley,
Foreign Correspondent

It is the end of winter, and Ahmad shivers beneath his blanket in the sunlight. A nearby farmhouse burns bright, black smoke trailing into the crisp morning air. In the middle of the field, arranged around a small iron table, sit the Jhandihari soldier, an elderly Acrian couple (the Beckers), and me. We hold small steaming cups of tea – the pot rests at the center of the circle. Etched into the metal surface is an intricate design reminiscent of vines and leaves.

The liquid warms me from the inside out. Looking at Ahmad, a man of the desert, I can only imagine the hell he has gone through in this war of snow and ice.

Hilda watches the building burn, a half smile on her face. She is in her mid-sixties, all silver gray hair and deep lines on her face, a map of every hardship she has faced over the years. I look at her hands as she sips her tea – they are calloused and hard, made of living stone.

“We salted the fields, too,” she says. “Not going to let those monsters grow anything here. Use us to grow anything here...”

Gunter cradles his blunderbuss in his lap, the barrel black with spent gunpowder. I haven't heard him say a word, just puff on his pipe. The combined smell of sweet Gewurzvanille tobacco and acrid wood smoke strikes a dissonant chord in me, and I find myself breathing through my mouth. His face is a block of weathered granite. He hasn't touched his tea.

A few hours earlier, Ahmad and his fellow soldiers came upon a small group of Venkestra laying siege to the farmhouse. To their credit, Hilda and Gunter held them off for almost half an hour by themselves. In the ensuing battle, all ten of the Venkestra were killed – and Ahmad's entire squad. Of fourteen Jhandihari, he

alone survived.

The snow beneath Ahmad's chair is a faint pink. His wounds have been bound, but an occasional droplet of blood drips from his seat and mixes with the slush and dirt. His normally tan skin is pale, his dark eyes distant.

Sharp reports echo across the field as bones crack in the fire, the fallen Venkestra unceremoniously dragged into the house before it was doused in fuel and set alight by Gunter's pipe match. The fallen Jhandihari will be brought back by a retrieval unit.

We sip in silence until the tea is gone. Ahmad's cup rattles as he places it on the saucer.

“We should go soon,” he says. “Emir be praised, it's a short way to the main camp.”

He picks up a stack of blankets – a reverent action. These are a gift from Hilda and Gunter. They kept one each and gave away the rest.

As we shuffle to the cart, loaded high with what goods the Becker's could stuff into the tiny transport, I look back and see the table and tea service silhouetted against the flames of the burning building. Soon all that will be left here is abandoned furniture in a barren field, and a mound of cinder and ash.



Stock Listings

Latest quotes provided courtesy of Dawkins & Emberwell Brokerage. All prices listed in Qoz.

Equity Market	Price
D&E Composite Index	12.0
Dornham Royal Teas (DRT)	9.1
Lirian Steamship & Foundry (LSF)	23.5
Amalgamated Coal & Galvacite (ACG)	16.0
Yoban Agricultural (YA)	5.8
Farthingham Tool & Leather (FTL)	7.6
National Bank of Liria (NBL)	18.5
Royal Tonics & Distilling (RTS)	8.9
Northern Railway & Locomotive (NRL)	12.2
United Lirian Textile (ULT)	4.7
First Galvanic & Semaphore (FGS)	19.6
Bosswink and Bosswink Assay & Mining (BBM)	10.1
Fourth Age Shipyards (FAS)	8.4
Bond Market	
Price	
30 Day Royal Exchequer Bond (100 Qoz).....	99
60 Day Royal Exchequer Bond (100 Qoz).....	97
90 Day Royal Exchequer Bond (100 Qoz).....	95
One Year Royal Exchequer Bond (100 Qoz).....	90

On the Penumbra Impulse

Good citizens of Iron City, I wear a mask. I walk amongst you, as one of your own, my face another in the crowd. I have done business with you, or shared a drink, or smote a common foe. I know you. You may call me Jack.

The learned say there are spots as black as night that **congregate** on the surface of the sun – night present in the light. Call us Sun-spots, a bright mirror of our dark family. In the past, my mask, made of the **darkest part of shadow**, granted me power and purpose. But I believe an age of great change is upon us, the old ones have awoken, great powers move their pawns upon the chessboard of Talus, and I, along with others amongst

my kind, believe it is dawn. The sun climbs and illuminates the landscape; a grand unmasking is at hand.

We have been here throughout the years, pulled puppeteer strings, sent those who opposed us to the arms of **Orpha**, pushed some to war, and made peace with the enemy. It is my intent to let you know of our existence, to know our power.

My first example is this missive, secreted here, your print co-opted to our purpose. By the time the humble editor of this good paper realizes he has been duped, copies will have been distributed to the **masses**.

The second will occur during the Festival. You will know it when you see it.

In one month's time, I promise to reveal myself to you. I entreat my other fellow dwellers in darkness – do not hide, do not despair – revel in your nature and know that our time is come.

Jack, Penumbra Herald, and Sun Jester in Waiting

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