

THE BATTLE NEAR PETERSBURG.

Early in the forenoon of Sunday our line of battle was formed east and west of the railroad and an advance ordered. The troops moved forward to the work before them in beautiful order and the best of spirits.

Meantime an important movement was started towards the enemy's extreme left, about a mile west of the railroad. A body of our troops, acting in conjunction with others, was sent down to the city, to reconnoitre the enemy's position from that direction and ascertain their strength there, with a view to further operations.

It was here that the gallant Brigadier-General John C. Saunders, of Alabama, was killed while leading his men in a charge. General Saunders had for some time past commanded Wilcox's old Alabama brigade, and in all the fights around Petersburg he displayed the most conspicuous bravery.

It is stated that in addition to the strong nature of the works on the enemy's left, which were assaulted by our flanking column, one of the main causes of the repulse at that point was the giving way of a brigade at a very critical moment, which caused considerable confusion and gave the Yankees a great advantage.

All accounts agree that the fight was a heavy one; but the battle for the possession of the railroad is yet to be fought, and the indications are that it will be attended by great slaughter on both sides.

In the engagement of Friday, the enemy's loss in killed and wounded is represented to have been very heavy, besides the large number of prisoners captured. We lost some prisoners and a considerable number wounded, but a small proportion killed.

The Richmond Dispatch of the 24th says: In three recent battles (Thursday, Friday and Sunday), the enemy's loss, including prisoners, could not have been less than eight thousand; probably more.

A RAID INTO ILLINOIS—FIVE STEAMERS CAPTURED AND BONDED.—Chicago, August 15.—About five hundred rebel cavalry, under Colonel Johnson, crossed the Ohio river into Illinois, at Sabine Bar, on Saturday.

The Richmond Dispatch thinks that all of our blockade running vessels ought to be commanded by naval officers. As a fact in support of this opinion, it states that only one vessel has been lost while commanded by a naval officer.

Fall of Prices in Columbia.—Within the past ten days the price of corn in Columbia, S. C., has declined from 25 to 12 dollars a bushel. Beef, bacon, and other articles of prime necessity have also declined considerably.

FROM GEORGIA.

A correspondent of the Columbia Carolinian, writing from Atlanta the 17th inst., says: "We have had the usual amount of sharp-shooting, and the inevitable five-minute shells that are daily and nightly thrown into the city by the valiant defenders of the Union; but beyond this and a reconnoitring party which struck the Atlanta and West Point Railroad at Fairburne, sixteen miles below this, and burned the depot, water tank, and tore up a few rails and then retired, both armies are still engaged in fortifying; we are strengthening our position, and the enemy in building approaches, which, owing to the nature of the ground, which is broken and hilly, many days must elapse before they can even begin their mining operations; which our engineer officers assure will result in a complete failure, owing to the impracticable nature of the ground, as I before stated.

In a conversation with one of Gen. Hood's staff, this morning, I learn that the enemy are busily engaged in fortifying along the Powder Spring Road, on the North side of the Chatahoocbee, and in the vicinity of Sweet Water Factory, which, he thinks, is an admission of their inability to accomplish the capture of this city, and is but a preliminary step towards a retreat. That Gen. Hood has defeated every move of Sherman's upon the chess board here, there can be no manner of doubt, and also, that the great "Plunker" has lost; and that would certainly not be a better evidence of his being put to his troops, than the manner in which his hosts from left to right, and vice versa, for the past ten days; but being everywhere met by the invincible Cleburne, he has been compelled to withdraw his horns—or wings—and, like Micawber, quietly wait for something to turn up, amusing himself and his master in the interim by telegraphing that he certainly would have Atlanta within a week, and slaughtering the poor "Johnnie Rebs"—on paper—by the tens of thousands at one full swoop of his official pen.

The Atlanta correspondent of the Columbus Enquirer says that General Hood is rapidly increasing the fighting men of his army: General Hood is putting guns into the hands of every available man connected with the army. All of the cooks have been armed and returned to their respective commands, and the negroes connected with the army have been employed in that capacity. Quartermasters and commissaries have been made to disgorge the many superfluous men in their departments; surgeons also. The result is that the army has received a considerable reinforcement. In Clayton's division alone the number of new men returned from the cooking detachments reached three hundred, which at this time is considered a good regiment. The increase from the cooks alone will reach four thousand effective men.

But General Hood does not stop here. He has ordered the arming of every artillerist except from No. 1 to 6, who are absolutely necessary to handle a piece; from this source an increase will be obtained amounting to near three thousand men. I must say, however, that this order converting artillery into infantry caused considerable fluttering among the battery boys. True, many of them take the thing quite easy, being perfectly willing to serve the country at this critical juncture in any capacity that will aid in the overthrow of Sherman and his "Hessians." From this our readers will at once perceive that General Hood is determined to leave nothing undone that will subvert the great interest of the country.

ATLANTA, Aug. 23.—A lady was killed near the Express office last evening by a shell, and a soldier lost a leg at the same time. The enemy shelled the city steadily all night. McDowell's warehouse on Hunter street, between Prior and White Hall, was destroyed by fire at 5 o'clock this morning. The Fire Brigade was promptly on hand and checked the spread of the conflagration, under a heavy fire from the enemy's batteries. About 500 bales of cotton were burned in the warehouse. A small frame building near State street was also burned last night. Both buildings were fired by shells. No casualties resulted from the shelling. The city is comparatively quiet this morning, save the usual artillery and picket firing.

ATLANTA, Aug. 24.—Another large conflagration occurred this afternoon, on Alabama street, destroying a large warehouse and several dwellings. The fire was caused by a shell from the enemy's batteries. During the fire the enemy shelled that part of the city with great rapidity. Prisoners reported that Sherman's army continues to be well fed. Citizens from Marietta report that the Federal claim that they have 20 days' supplies at that place.

ATLANTA, Aug. 25.—For some cause the federal batteries are silent this morning. Last night a shell struck the Presbyterian Church, on Marietta street, and exploded in the basement where a number of citizens had sought shelter. A fragment of shell cut off the arm of a citizen lying in bed in the basement. No other casualties.

FROM THE WEST.

Capture of Memphis, Tenn., by the Confederates. An official dispatch from Gen. Maury, at Mobile, confirms the capture of Memphis by Forrest, Washburne and staff were captured with the city.

A special dispatch to the Advertiser from Panama and Oxford, says Forrest arrived at Panama last night. The Yankee loss at Memphis was 500. The surprise was complete. The night charge was exciting and terrific. Gen. Forrest sent a flag of truce offering to exchange but Washburne refused, saying he would capture him before reaching Panama.

Gen Smith, (Yankee) learning Forrest's movements hastily retreated from Oxford towards Holly Springs, burning the Court House, the principal business houses, and a portion of the private residences, including the house of Col Jacob Thompson, and committing many other depredations. Our forces have re-occupied Oxford, and are pursuing Smith.

For the Benefit of Southern Prisoners.—A fair for the benefit of Confederate prisoners of war at the North is to be held in London, England, in October, under the patronage of Her Imperial Highness the Princess Murat, the Marchioness of Bath, Lothian and Ailesbury, Countess of Chesterfield, and other distinguished ladies. It is suggested that the ladies of the South may send to this fair specimens of their handiwork for sale. Such contributions may be sent to the Mercury office, Charleston, South Carolina, and they will be forwarded to London.

AN ARMISTICE.

The New York Herald proposes an armistice as a trick to circumvent the Confederate authorities, to strengthen the war party in the United States, to reorganize and retrain their armies, to deceive their people and to delude foreign nations. We propose an armistice as a genuine peace measure—to be preceded by the recognition of our nationality, and to be followed immediately by the evacuation of all the States of this Confederacy, including forts and fortified places, and by the raising of the blockade. Such an armistice may be followed by a convention for discussing any proposition that either party may submit.—Having most reluctantly accepted the war forced upon us by the United States, our people can too proudly point to the past to fear any future discussion in convention. A convention between representatives or diplomats will be required at a not distant day, and must eventually terminate this wicked, useless and cruel war. We therefore cordially agree to a Convention of the States to discuss propositions of peace or war, is unconstitutional in both governments, and will not be tolerated by the States of this Confederacy. The President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, is empowered to make treaties—and these authorities alone will discuss, by proper representatives, the proposition before the proposed Convention.

Mr. Lincoln can have an armistice, but he must take his armistice, and his armies and his fleets clear out to his own country. If we are to have his armies and navies upon us during the armistice, we prefer fighting them. We would not be understood as rejecting anything looking to peace, and in order to give peace a fair start, and for our enemies to lay down the conditions upon which an armistice will be accepted.—Richmond Enquirer.

FROM MOBILE.

MOBILE, Aug. 23.—Several vessels are cruising below the obstructions in the upper bay. Scouts report that yesterday morning the Federal fleet hauled up close to Fort Morgan and opened fire. The Fort replied and badly crippled two vessels. On the eastern shore the enemy are landing and plundering near Point Clear.

MOBILE, Aug. 24.—Fort Morgan is in the enemy's hands. Whether surrendered, evacuated, or blown up, is unknown. Among the many conflicting rumors there is nothing reliable. A special dispatch to the Advertiser dated Abbeville, 24th, says the enemy burned Abbeville last night. Their advance passed through Holly Springs this morning, moving towards Lagrange. Their wagon train crossed the Tallahatchie and camped at Waterloo last night.

DETAILS.

We have examined the law, allowing detail to producers on their giving bond to sell their surplus to Government at government prices; and we are satisfied that it embraces in the obligation all produce on hand—not the coming, but the existing produce also.

There are many persons who are violating this obligation and are even selling last year's corn at over a hundred dollars a barrel. Every officer in the military service should put an eye on such men, report them, and have them conscripted at once. A hundred dollars a barrel for corn! With such a crop of wheat, such a surplus of old corn remaining, with gardens filled with vegetables, and orchards with fruits, and the largest prospect of corn and peas now within a short period of ripening! Such a practice from any citizen, is war upon the Confederacy. We recognize how good citizens are drawn into the current of such practices, and it can only be remedied by the restoration of general confidence, and the social deterioration to uphold the currency. Communities acting in concert, alone can remedy the evil.

There are good men who have never followed the crowd to do evil—who have maintained low prices, and are honored. They are serving the nation as usefully as soldiers in the field. There every incentive to all men who love their country, to go and do likewise.—Richmond Confederate.

THE BLACK FLAG.—Two new cases are now pending in which the proposed action of the officers will call for retaliation, swift and sure. Col. McDonald, of Virginia, a regular officer in the Confederate service, has been captured and put in irons with a view to his execution as a bushwhacker. And Wm B. McGill, of the 1st Maryland Confederate Cavalry, has been captured and, instead of being held as a prisoner of war, thrown into jail on a charge of being engaged with McCausland's command in burning Chambersburg. This is an outrageous proceeding. McGill obeyed orders, and is no more liable individually for the burning of Chambersburg than we are. We have one consolation, however. If the Yankees should execute him for that act, then every Yankee officer and soldier who has committed a similar act in burning any of the score of towns and thousands of private houses, will be equally liable to execution, and our authorities might as well begin at once and hang all the forty thousand prisoners we hold, officers and men, for we doubt if there is a single one of them who has not been engaged, directly or indirectly, in some incendiary act in the Confederacy. For the present, our government has put in irons the Yankee Col. Crook as a hostage for Col. McDonald, and a Yankee private as a hostage for McGill. This is right. And we hope to see every violation of the laws of war and the rights of our soldiers promptly met by retaliation.—Fayetteville Observer.

Stockholders' Meeting. The annual meeting of the Stockholders of the Western Plank Road Company, will be held at the House of Peter Cassler, in Gaston county, on Wednesday the 21st of September next. A full attendance is desired. C. C. HENDERSON, Secy. Aug 22, 1864.

EARLY'S VICTORY IN THE VALLEY.

Our correspondent sends us the following account of Early's late victory in the Valley, the official report of which we publish below. His letter is dated Winchester, August 17th:

"Old Jubilee" (as the boys call him) has come again, and yet another glorious victory has transpired here. Like the rest, it was a complete rout; pell-mell they were driven through town. Early when the Yankees are reinforced falls back to prevent being flanked to Strasburg. Then he takes a running start, thrashes the Yankees there without stopping, and away they go for "My Maryland." This time Sheridan, who is in command of the entire force, had the 19th corps, lately from Banks, the 8th, Hanters, the 6th, Wright's, (Sedgewick's) with not less than fifteen thousand cavalry under Wilson, (about 40,000 in all.) Only a small portion of their infantry were in the fight yesterday. They left in the morning, leaving 15,000 cavalry and some 4,000 infantry, to support them. Holding, as they did, all the commanding positions around Winchester, with artillery commanding the approach for miles, it was not to be supposed they could be dislodged except by artillery, as heretofore. For hours, heavy skirmishing was heard from our side with musketry, which was answered by the deafening roar of their artillery; but about night was distantly heard the "rebel yell"—then they came up the hill—one more yell—and away flew the Yankees.

As before, Early had left Strasburg in the morning, marched 20 miles, routing the enemy as his advance skirmishers, and followed them as far as the darkness of the night would suffer him. The enemy, as they retired from Strasburg, literally destroyed everything in the way of food for man or beast.—With their immense cavalry they extended their lines from Front Royal, in Warren county, to the North Mountains, West of Strasburg, and burnt every bushel of wheat, in stack, barn or mill, in Frederick, Warren and Clark, as well as out and hay; they have really left absolutely nothing in those three counties. They drove before them every horse, cow, sheep, pig, calf and living animal from the country. What the people are to do, God only knows. General Early, two weeks since, gave orders not to have a bushel of grain taken from below Strasburg, as hardly enough was left for the citizens.

An official despatch states that a portion of our force in the Valley crossed the Shenandoah at Front Royal on the 16th, and drove the enemy's cavalry, which retreated towards Winchester, burning the hay and wheat stacks in their route. On the 17th Sheridan began to retire from his post, was pursued and two divisions of the 9th corps, with a large force of cavalry, overtaken at Winchester and driven through the town, losing over two hundred prisoners. The enemy fell back towards Harper's Ferry.

North Carolinians at Fort Delaware.—A returned Confederate Surgeon furnishes a list of prisoners in one division of the Fort from North Carolina: Lieuts. G P Higley, 30th; J C Hines, 5th Cavalry; J C Bullock, 25d; A M Wilhoit, 20th, sick with small pox; Frank Mcintosh, N. Cavasery; A Bond, J O Frink, D S Ballard, J O McKim, G W Corbett, 18th; E Hurley, 28th; M McLeod, 26th; Capt J C Lewis and N M Wooten, 18th; W G McKee and J G Knox, 7th; A T Cole and Corp E S Hart, 23d.

There are 1,400 Confederate officers in Fort Delaware. Another list has the following North Carolinians: Brig Gen R B Volk, 6th Cavalry; Maj T P Burch, Ransom's Staff; Maj J R McDonald, 51st; Lieut J R Chambers, 60th. Among the Confederates returned by the flag of truce boat which arrived at Varina, on the 22d, were J A McArthur and H McEachen, 51st N C; R W Belo, 56th N C.

HEAVY INFUX OF YANKEES.—For the past two days the trains from Petersburg have been mostly occupied in bringing to this city the Yankee prisoners which were captured near Petersburg on the evening of the 19th instant. The whole number received at the Libby up to last night footed up over twenty-five hundred, including upwards of seventy-five officers.—Richmond Dispatch, 22d.

CAUGHT.—A deserter, dressed in ladies' apparel, was caught on the Southern train, just before leaving for Columbia. He said, after being arrested, that he belonged to the 12th Alabama regiment.—Bulletin.

COURTESIES TO THE ENEMY.—Nothing has appeared from the military pen of Beauford more grateful to the sense of self-respect in the hearts of the Confederate people than Special Order No. 15, ordering that no communication whatever should be held between our pickets and those of the enemy. Some Confederate officers, as well as soldiers, may read with advantage that order, which speaks of "the moral disgrace incurred by troops in anything like voluntary or unnecessary association with the savage foes, who are not only warring against us, but persecuting our women and children and destroying private property. The hands of such a foe are unworthy the friendly or courteous touch of a Confederate soldier."

The soul that prompted those words is in the cause. Earnestness of nature is as essential in a soldier as an actor. We would rather listen to an electrical outbreak of a "forest-born Demosthenes" than a dozen classical orations as perfect and cold as the statues of great masters. When the two are united, we have the highest style of eloquence; and when genius and patriotism are united in a military man, we have the model which all soldiers may do well to study. Such a warrior is Beauford. He is not fighting for glory or the display of science. The powerful machinery of his intellect is moved by the inward fires of a fervid and intense devotion to his country. No more clearly comprehends the nature of this contest, or the character of the enemy with whom we have to deal. A man of true humanity and genius, he has none of that false chivalry which fights wolves and panthers in gold gloves and recognizes midnight burglars and highway robbers as honorable foes.—"Order No. 15" is the true fire of the Southern flint.—Richmond Dispatch.

Dr. Pride Jones, of Hillsboro, has been appointed Confederate States Marshal for the State of North Carolina, vice Wesley Jones, Esq., resigned. This celebrated Horse will stand during the Fall season at my stables in Charlotte. The reputation of "Garrett Davis" is well known in this section of the State, and those who want to raise fine stock would do well to patronize him. \$5 to the Groom. R. RABE, Charlotte, Aug 22, 1864.

ORDERS FROM GEN. LEE.

HEADQ'S ARMY NO. VA., Aug. 10, 1864. Passed at the first Session of the 2d Congress of the Confederate States.

All persons connected with this army, who are absent without proper authority, are enjoined to return to their respective commands without delay. This order is intended to embrace those who have remained absent beyond the time limited for their return, or after the cause of their absence has ceased. All such persons are admonished that every day they remain away from their posts, adds to the dangers and labors of their comrades, while it increases their own responsibility to the laws they are violating.

The Commanding General deems it only necessary to remind those who have erred through thoughtlessness or negligence, of the shame and disgrace they will bring upon themselves and their families, if they shrink from the manifold discharge of duty in the hour of their country's need, and leave their homes to be defended and their independence to be secured by the unaided courage of others.

To those whose absence has been prolonged until they have incurred the guilt of desertion, he can only say that a prompt and voluntary return to duty alone can palliate their offence and entitle them to expect any clemency. If arrested and brought back justice to the faithful and true as well as the interests and safety of the country requires that they shall suffer the extreme penalty of the law.

R. E. LEE, General. Some of the papers have noticed the appearance of yellow fever in Wilmington. This is not so. There is no fever in Wilmington and we trust there will be none this season. There are some cases at quarantine, 30 miles below the town, but there is thought to be but little danger of its communicating with the town. The fever is from Nassau and is one of the luxuries of the blockade.

Conscription Office.

The following Circular from the Bureau of Conscription, published for the information of all concerned, is Circular No. 37, from this office, has been revoked. By order of the commandant. E. J. HARDIN, Adjutant.

CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA, War Dept., Bureau of Conscription, Richmond, Va., Aug. 9, 1864.

Whereas all applications for detail made to the Local Enrolling Officer, will, after investigation, be forwarded with report to the District Enrolling Officer. If the District Enrolling Officer approves the application, he will grant a furlough for sixty days. The reasons for refusal, or the papers will be stated in full on a separate sheet, and the papers forwarded through the commandant for the State, who will also express his opinion to this office for final action.

Where, in the course of transmission under previous instructions, the papers have passed from the District Enrolling Officer to the commandant, action similar to that heretofore directed to be taken by the commandant, that is a furlough for sixty days will be granted in case of approval, and the papers will be returned to the Local Enrolling Officer, in case of disapproval, when the papers will be kept on file until an appeal is taken. The furlough to be granted by the Enrolling officer is in the nature of an indulgence, the object being to protect the parties during the delay, and it is revoked by the action of the Bureau.

MAIL CONTRACT. I am authorized to invite sealed proposals until the end of four weeks from date, for carrying the mail on Route No. 51st, from Charlotte, N. C., by Alexandria, Craighead, Davidson College, Mount Mourne, Granite Hill, Tuln and Fallstown, to Statesville, N. C., 42 miles and back three times a week—the contract to continue until the 30th June, 1867. D. G. OVERMAN, P. M., Charlotte, N. C.

PROVIDENCE ACADEMY. The exercises of this School will be resumed on the 29th instant. Terms per session of 20 weeks: Classics, \$50 00, English, \$30 00. Students will be charged from the time of entrance till the end of the session, but those entering within one month from the beginning, will pay from commencement. E. C. KEYKENDAL, Principal. Aug 15, 1864.

LAST NOTICE. The law will be enforced against all persons who have failed to make their returns of the additional 10 per cent for the year 1863, and the specific and quarterly sales for 1864. The amount of all goods, wares or merchandise of any description whatever, consigned to any merchant in this town and sold by him in this district, must be returned at my office, and the tax of two and a half per cent (excepting the object being taxed) must be paid. D. G. MAXWELL, Collector 45th Dist. Aug 14, 1864.

FOR SALE. Capstan Rope, Steel Wire Cloth, Candles. Apply at the RUDASILL MINE, Charlotte. Aug 15, 1864.

Tax Notice for Union County. The Confederate Tax Assessors for Union County will attend at the following Precincts for the purpose of taking in the returns of all the Taxable property and effects taxed under the Act of Feb 17, 1864, to-wit: Asher's, Thursday and Friday, Aug 25th & 26th; Rogers', Saturday, 27th; Wilson's, Monday, 29th; Tuesday & Wednesday, 30th & 31st; Broom's, Thursday & Friday, Sept 1st & 2d; Ritchie's, Saturday, 3d; Crowell's, Monday & Tuesday, 5th & 6th; Monroe, Wednesday & Thursday, 7th & 8th; Trull's, Friday, 9th; T. Griffin's, Monday, 11th; Bancon's, Tuesday & Wednesday, 13th & 14th; Grass Creek, Thursday & Friday, 15th & 16th.

"GARRETT DAVIS". This celebrated Horse will stand during the Fall season at my stables in Charlotte. The reputation of "Garrett Davis" is well known in this section of the State, and those who want to raise fine stock would do well to patronize him. \$5 to the Groom. R. RABE, Charlotte, Aug 22, 1864.