

CAROLINA WATCHMAN.

WEEKLY.

VOL. XX.

SALISBURY, N. C., AUGUST 11, 1862.

NUMBER 12.

J. J. BRUNER,
EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

From the Richmond Examiner July 4.
The Recent Attack on McClellan's Fleet and Recapture.

At one o'clock on Friday morning last many persons in this city and in the country for miles above heard a terrific cannonading in the direction of Drewry's Bluff. The firing continued without lull or cessation for an hour and half, and was as rapid and distinctly audible as at any time during the recent battles. Every flash of the guns was visible from our hills, illuminating the Southern horizon like summer lightning.

After daylight on Friday morning, and during the forenoon, the cannonading was the theme of every conversation on the street corners, and conflicting were the rumours of its cause and result. Since Monday last it had been surmised by the knowing ones that an attempt was about to be made to intercept McClellan's communication on James river. And the most of our citizens inclined to the belief that the firing heard was the result of the attempted execution of this design. Many, however, believed that an attack had been made on Drewry's Bluff by the Yankee gunboats.

About noon speculations on the subject were put at rest by a telegraphic dispatch from Petersburg announcing that an attack had been made on the Yankee fleet and encampment at Berkeley by a large number of our artillerymen, whose cannon had been planted during Thursday at Coggin's Point and other places lower down James river. The dispatch further stated that the gunboats replied to our artillery without effect; that, though the damage sustained by the fleet was unknown, a "great crashing" had been heard in the river during the cannonade; and that when Friday morning dawned not a vessel of the fleet was visible—all, it was supposed, having dropped down the river.

Friday night several members of the Hanover artillery arrived here in charge of the body of their comrade, Wm. T. Dalton, who had been killed during the attack. They could give no clear account of the engagement. All day Saturday the mind of the community was exercised on the subject of the result of the attack, but no satisfactory information could be obtained from any quarter. It was thought that a renewal of the attack at a point lower down the river, was meditated, and that, therefore, any news of the fight of Friday was kept from the public for fear lest the enemy should be put on his guard. As, however, there appears now no reason for withholding them, we shall lay before our readers such particulars of the engagement as have come to our knowledge.

Captain Miles C. Macon, of the Fayette Artillery, returned to this city Saturday evening, and from him we have obtained some interesting facts connected with the expedition.

General Pendleton, with many powerful batteries, left Richmond Tuesday morning and arrived in the neighborhood of City Point on Wednesday. The attack on the enemy's fleet was to have been made that night, but owing to a misunderstanding of orders the different batteries failed to rendezvous at the appointed place, and it was, of necessity, postponed.

On Thursday, Colonel Brown and Captain Macon and Watson, the latter of the Second Howitzers, made a thorough reconnaissance of the river and the south bank, opposite McClellan's encampment. At Maycock's Landing, directly opposite Westover, they tied their horses in the woods and crept close to the river bank. A large and splendid steamer said to be occupied as quarters by McClellan's principal officers was lying close ashore at the Westover Landing. Between her and the Southern shore, and as far as the eye could reach up and down the stream were great numbers of large steamers and transports. Some of the latter were within four hundred yards of the southern shore.

The sound of voices in conversation were plainly heard. While the officers were making observations a steamer arrived from below and cast anchor in the midst of the fleet. Immediately a number of voices from the vessels were heard calling for the New York Herald and enquiring what Pope was doing. To the enquiry about Pope, a man on board the steamer replied, "Oh, he has got everything right; he's going to give them a—!"

Having completed their reconnaissance our officers withdrew. At a quarter to twelve o'clock our batteries were in the positions assigned them. The Hanover battery was stationed at Coggin's Point; the Fayette Artillery at Maycock's, half a mile below; the Second Howitzers were in position just below Maycock's, and the

other batteries still further down the bank. By a preconcerted plan, the firing of Long Tom by the Hanover battery was to be the signal for the other batteries to open fire. It was a calm, starlight night; not a sound broke upon the ear. The river, unscathed by a breath of air, flowed silently by, while on its tranquil bosom floated in fancied security the navy of the Union, the lights from the rigging and cabins alone indicating where the vessels lay. The large steamer, supposed to be officers' quarters, was seen at that late hour brilliantly illuminated by lights which twinkled through every window. The witching hour of night drew on apace as our men anxiously awaited the signal for opening fire. "Eight o'clock" was struck by the gunboats in the river; the vesperial cry "twelve o'clock—all's well!"—As the last word died upon the ear a sheet of flame darted out from Coggin's Point, followed by a deafening report, told that Long Tom had spoken, and the fight was begun. Simultaneously blazes followed blazes from point to point miles down the river. The fleet was in an instant thrown into commotion. Yells, and cries, and shrieks, mingled with the repeated cry of "put out that light," were heard from every steamer and schooner at once. And very quickly were the lights extinguished. But our pieces having been previously trailed into range, this was a matter of small consequence. For three quarters of an hour our fire was poured forth unintermittently. The crashing of our shot through the ships' timbers could be heard at every discharge, and hundreds of the shells were seen to explode on board the vessels. The order from General Pendleton was to fire thirty rounds to each gun and withdraw. We had nearly fired this complement before the gunboats had steamed up and cleared for action. When they did open with their broadsides it was with more notes than effect. Before they obtained the range our men had fired their last shot and were on the retreat. The enemy, however, showed that they had perfect range of the road which runs parallel with the river, by which they knew we were retreating. Almost every shot fell within fifty yards of this road, and it seems miraculous that though our artillery fired it for miles not one of them was struck. By half-past one o'clock the last of our men had retired to a safe distance, but the gunboats continued to shell the shore for hours afterwards.

Our loss in this engagement was William T. Dalton, killed, and Thomas Farquhar and Patrick Graham, of the Hanover battery, wounded by one of the enemy's shells. Alexander Tucker, of the Page battery, wounded by the premature explosion of a gun; and three men, of the Albemarle battery, seriously wounded by the upsetting of one of our caissons during our retreat.

Of the damage done the enemy we are yet without the means of making an estimate. His loss of life and property must, however, have been terribly large. Our guns threw at least between twelve and fifteen hundred shot and shell, and the remotest object at which we fired was within point-blank range of our smallest guns. The most of the vessels were but from five hundred yards to a half mile distant. During the engagement the crash of our shot through the wooden sides of the vessels and steamers could be distinguished above the roar of the guns, and our shells were seen to explode over and within the vessels, and a number of them within McClellan's encampment, on the opposite shore.

On Saturday morning Captain Macon rode from Petersburg in the direction of the scene of the previous day's engagement. The gunboats had removed the shelling of the shore. Near City Point he met one of our videttes, who had just been driven from the river bank by the enemy's projectiles, and who had been present during our attack, and remained after our artillery had retired. This picket assured Captain Macon that thirty-one of the enemy's transports had been sunk where they lay at anchor, and that a number of others had been towed down the stream Friday morning in a shattered condition. He also stated that the fine steamer to which we have alluded to as the officers' quarters was literally torn to pieces. One wheel-house was shot away; and there seemed to be scarcely a whole plank on her sides and upper deck.

The Petersburg Express of yesterday states that on Friday there were ninety vessels, of all kinds, remaining in the river near Berkeley, and forty-five had been towed away.

We are reliably informed that, on Saturday afternoon, McClellan sent a messenger, under a flag of truce, to inform Gen. Lee that, in a day or two, transports laden

with paroled Confederate prisoners might be expected up James river, and advising him to caution his artillerymen how they fired.

BELLE'S ISLAND PRISON DEPOT.

Belle's Island, in the James river, heretofore little known and without any heroic interest, is destined to figure hereafter more conspicuously as the depot for the confinement of the several thousand Yankee prisoners taken in the late battles before Richmond, and confined for sometime afterwards in the Libby and other prisons of the city, but within the last few weeks removed to the island. The island is about one mile in length and a quarter of a mile in breadth, with two branches of the river that form, clasping the shores on either side.

On a level portion near the landing is located the camp of the prisoners, containing between 400 and 500 tents, closely bunched together, with a broad avenue running through the centre, which has been named Broadway, after the famous New York thoroughfare. This Yankee settlement now numbers upwards of 4,500 inhabitants, and in the evening, when their promenade commences, Broadway on Belle Island rivals Broadway in New York, certainly in the grotesqueness of costume.

The encampment of the guard is located on a hill overlooking the Yankee encampment. The guard numbers about three hundred men, including Day's light artillery battery, Captain Norrie Montgomery, who superintends the whole police arrangement. Captain Montgomery and his officers have their headquarters in a school house in the hollow, near the Yankee settlement. A railing surrounds the camp, and beyond its confines none of the prisoners are allowed to intrude except under guard. A bathing spot has been selected under the trees in the river, and the prisoners are conducted out in squads of ten, and enjoy a bath of a few minutes, which they seem to enjoy very much. The whole day is occupied in this manner until the whole four thousand odd hundreds have made their ablutions. The health of the prisoners has improved to a remarkable degree under the influence of the water and fresh air of the island.

Only fifteen deaths have occurred since the island was occupied. Inside of the camp enclosure of the Yankees they are allowed to exercise any form of municipal government they please. Many of them display the usual amount of Yankee ingenuity in the arrangement of their domestic quarters. Wells have been sunk in various parts of the camp, from whence excellent water is obtained.

But while this people exercise their ingenuity and skill, we are sorry to state that they are practising among themselves the vice which distinguished them while enjoying the opportunities at large in Virginia. They are the most inveterate thieves and on every opportunity deplete upon one another. For one to take off his shoes, or a piece of his garment, and fall to sleep, is to invite a theft from his comrade, and every day complaints are made to the commanding officer of the guard of such depredations.

Numbers have lost their shoes and pieces of their clothing, and go about barefooted, or in their stocking feet, and half naked.

One of their own officers, captured with the prisoners, has established a sutlership, and the prisoners make purchases from him of such articles as are not furnished in the daily rations. They loudly complain of his extortion, however, and threaten to have him sent to the Rip Raps when they get back. Their funds are running short, too, and many are compelled to part with whatever they have saleable about them.

They are all looking hopefully forward to an exchange, and are very persistent in their enquiries concerning the prospect. A few nights since five of the prisoners attempted to escape by swimming the river. One of them succeeded in getting nearly across, but all were captured and are now kept under guard.

Everything about the island suggests cleanliness, comfort, and strict discipline. The island is accessible by boat from the landing below the Tredegar Iron Works.

We learn that a communication from our government, enquiring whether Butler's course in New Orleans was countenanced by his government, not having been responded to, another communication has been dispatched, with the accompanying notice that an explicit answer will be expected in a given time, and that in the absence of such, the silence of the Lincoln Government will be construed as an affirmative reply.—Examiner.

THE NEUTRALITY OF THE SHERR.

Retaliatory Measures of the Confederate Government.
RICHMOND, August 2.—An important "General Order" (No. 45) from the Adjutant and Inspector General's Office has been published, the substance of which is as follows:

Article I, states that the following orders are published for the information and observance of all concerned:

[The next five articles are in the form of a preamble.]

Article II recites the order issued by the Secretary of War of the United States, directing the military commanders of that government to seize and use the property, real and personal, belonging to the inhabitants of this Confederacy, and states that no provision is made for any compensation to the owners of private property thus seized.

Article III quotes Gen. Pope's recent order for the arrest of "all disloyal male citizens," who are to be "conducted beyond the lines of the United States Army, etc."

Article IV, recites the order of Brigadier General Steinwehr, U. S. A., for the arrest of the "most prominent citizens of Page county, Va.," to be held in bondage, and to suffer death in the event of any of the soldiers of the said Steinwehr being shot by "backshooters"—by which term are meant citizens of this Confederacy who have taken arms to defend their homes.

Article V. And whereas it results from the above orders that some of the military authorities of the United States, not content with the unjust and aggressive warfare waged with savage cruelty against an offending people, and exasperated by the failure of their effort to subjugate them, have now determined to violate all rules and usages of war, and to convert the hostilities hitherto waged against armed forces into a campaign of robbery against unarmed citizens and peaceful tillers of the soil.

Article VI. And, whereas the government, bound by the highest obligations of duty to its citizens, is thus driven to the necessity of adopting such just measures of retribution and retaliation as may seem adequate to repress and punish these barbarities; and whereas the orders above recited have been only published and made known to the government since the signature of the cartel for the exchange of prisoners of war, which cartel, in so far as it provides for an exchange of those hereafter captured, would never have been signed or agreed to by this government, if the intention to change the war into a system of indiscriminate robbery had been made known to it; and whereas a just regard to humanity forbids that the repression of crime, which this government is thus compelled to enforce, should be unnecessarily extended on the enlisted men in the army of the United States, who may be the unwilling instruments of the savage cruelty of their commanders; so long as there is a hope that the excesses of the enemy may be checked or prevented by retribution on commissioned officers, who have the power to avoid the guilty action, by refusing service under a government which seeks their aid in the perpetration of such infamous barbarities—

VII. THEREFORE, It is ordered, That Maj. Gen. Pope, Brig. Gen. Steinwehr, and all commissioned officers serving under their respective commands, be and they are hereby expressly and specially declared to be not entitled to be considered as soldiers, and, therefore, not entitled to the benefit of the cartel for the parole of future prisoners of war: *Order, further*, That in the event of the capture of Maj. Gen. Pope or Brig. Gen. Steinwehr, or any commissioned officers serving under them, the captives so taken shall be held in close confinement so long as the orders aforesaid shall continue in force and unrevoked by the competent military authorities of the United States; and that in the event of the murder of any unarmed citizen or inhabitant of this Confederacy, by virtue, or under pretext of any of the orders heretofore recited, whether with or without trial, whether under pretence of said citizen being a spy or hostage, or any other pretence, it shall be the duty of the commanding general of the Confederacy to cause immediately to be hung, out of the commissioned officers prisoners aforesaid, a number equal to the number of our own citizens thus murdered by the enemy. By order: S. COOPER, Adjutant and Inspector-General U. S. A.

A correspondent of the Macon Telegraph states some of the spoils of the late victories near Richmond, as follows:

Number of prisoners ten thousand one hundred and twenty. Small arms 30,000; 17 miles telegraph wire and apparatus; 10,000 axes, spades and shovels, enough to last our army a twelve month; 250 to 300 horses and mules; tents, blankets, knapsacks and medical stores innumerable.

ATROCIOUS PERSONAL ATTACK ON COL. VANCE.

We make the following extract from the State Journal, one of the special organs of Gov. Clarke:

"It might be too invidious to run the contrast, for comparison is out of the question, between Colonel Vance and Col. Johnston, into personal appearances, and we will touch these only slightly and with due regard to Col. V's opinion of himself. As they are both married men it cannot effect either very seriously with our female patriots. Col. Vance is decidedly ugly. Col. Johnston, if not handsome, is quite comely.—Col. Vance's eyes are somewhat the appearance of two twenty-penny nails driven into the centre of a three pound turnip which has been covered with a wig, in comparison with whose dull, somnolent expression, Col. Johnston's are as two sparkling diamonds inserted in a globe of pure gold and adorning a countenance radiant with smiles. Col. Vance's gait is that of a superannated animal of the bovine species, lazily ambling to the pasture; Col. Johnston's that of an Arabian charger saddled for the chase, when he hears the horn of the huntsman. Col. Vance buys fine clothes, made up by the most fashionable tailors, but owing to the rotundity of his person, and the irregularity of its surface, they never "fit." Hence he is always at war with himself or with his tailor, and even in his finest holidays, his external appearance is that of a Dutch farmer. Col. Johnston buys good substantial clothes, knows how to preserve and how to put them on, has always "a good fit," and his whole appearance is that of a neat, tidy, methodical American gentleman and man of business. Col. Vance's foot—and what a foot! is like his head, out of all shape, and of prodigious dimensions; between no part of which and the ground, a bug could find shelter from a storm or refuge from an enemy, and is in times like these, hard to protect from stumps in summer and frosts in winter. Col. Johnston has quite a respectable foot, but it is that of a fairy's in size and symmetry compared with Col. Vance's. Personally, nature never intended Col. Vance for a Governor; and the people will not violate the laws of nature by making him one."

There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip.—Among the prisoners taken at Marlborough's is one Capt. O. C. Rounds, of the sixth Michigan regiment, who was captured by Lieut. Graham, of Lawton cavalry, under peculiar circumstances. Rounds was provost marshal of Marlborough, and got into fever with a Union family at that place, and was to be married to a daughter of that family on Sunday night, the 18th ult., but Lieutenant Graham, the heartless man, took him prisoner early that morning. Instead of enjoying the delights of early wedlock, he is now in prison at Madison, Ga., and his innamorata is disconsolate. She should immediately start for Michigan, where she can meet her "lover" (when he is exchanged), and have the knot tied.

Lieut. Graham, it seems, found out where the captain was stopping—at the house of his "new love"—so enamored of her charms that he was not on the lookout for rebels, and was caught napping.—He went to the house and was met by the captain's intended wife, who, in answer to his inquiries, assured him that Capt. Rounds was not in the house. Some patriotic Southern ladies who had at first informed him of the captain's whereabouts, and were near by looking on, assured him that the captain was in the house, upon which Lt. Graham walked in and commenced a search. He soon discovered him under the bed; and, seizing him by the foot, dragged him out and received from him his sword.

The subjects of the royal Abc, who were buying cotton in the vicinity of Huntsville, were arrested by a party of Alabama Rangers. They, in company with a Federal deserter, passed through here yesterday morning on their way to Montgomery. It is said they had \$7,500 in gold in their possession.—Some Courier.