

NOTES ON NAVAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS.

RADICAL CHANGE IN THE PLAN.

Though the press of the country has been requested to refrain from publishing minute accounts of the military operations, sufficient information of the great movements in Virginia have been made public to indicate the general plan of the campaign. General McClellan's army has been withdrawn from its position 20 miles southeast of Richmond, and moved round to join the army of General Pope, at Culpepper Court House, 92 miles northwest of Richmond. General Burnside's army has also been moved to the same vicinity, and thus our forces have been concentrated in great strength in front of the principal rebel army. It will be observed that this plan of concentration of forces is a radical change from the scattered and teasing warfare which has been waged for the last 15 months. The combined armies of the Republic stand thus in front of the main force of the enemy, the nation is watching with intense anxiety to see whether our generals have also revolutionized their policy; whether they will move forward in a resolute and determined effort to crush the rebellion, or whether they will again resort to spades, while our armies are again wasted by disease, and the remaining resources of the country are frittered away.

THE GENERAL PLAN OF CONCENTRATION.

We have not full details of the several movements adopted in effecting the concentration of our forces, but such facts as we have been able to gather, we will lay in connected form before our readers:—

It seems that in order to prevent the enemy from disturbing McClellan during his evacuation of the peninsula, General Pope was ordered to advance toward Richmond, thus threatening the rebel capital and occupying the attention of the enemy on that side. This advance led to the battle of Cheat Mountain, described in our last. From the field of that battle General Jackson fell back several miles toward Richmond, but Jefferson Davis, learning that McClellan had departed from near Richmond, now ordered all of his forces northward to join Jackson, in hopes of being able to overwhelm Pope before McClellan should arrive to his aid. General Pope, however, in accordance with the general plan, fell back across the Rappahannock river, and on the banks of this stream planted his artillery and held the advancing hosts of the enemy in check until he was joined by the armies of Burnside and McClellan.

GENERAL POPE'S MOVEMENTS.

At the time of the battle of Cheat Mountain, General Pope's head quarters were at Culpepper Court House, a small village on the line of the Orange and Alexandria railroad, 62 miles southwest from Alexandria, and 92 miles by railroad northwest from Richmond. When General Pope discovered that the main rebel army, estimated at some 200,000 men, was advancing to overwhelm him, he determined to fall back across the Rappahannock, a considerable stream which crosses the railroad 11 miles to the northeast of Culpepper. The sick and wounded who could bear the journey were accordingly dispatched by railroad to the hospitals of Alexandria and Washington, and all superfluous baggage was removed to the rear. The army then followed, General Sigel's corps forming the rear guard.

THE FIGHT OF WEDNESDAY.

The enemy followed our retreating forces pretty closely, but their advanced corps first came in collision with our rear on Wednesday, the 20th of August. Our rear guard was at Brandy Station, 6 miles from Culpepper and 5 from the Rappahannock, when the head of the pursuing columns came in sight.

Our rear guard supposing that the rebel force was a mere skirmishing party sent in advance, and wishing to check such presumptuous reconnoitering, turned upon it and the order to charge was given. Immediately the three cavalry regiments of Hatch's Brigade—the Harris Lights, 1st Pennsylvania and 1st New Jersey—formed in line of battle and swept forward with tremendous cheers; but coming suddenly upon a broad and deep ditch they were compelled to draw rein and at the instant a large force of rebel infantry rose from cover and poured a heavy volley into the ranks, which emptied many saddles and threw our squadrons into confusion. The line gave way at the center, but the wings wavering and showing a dispo-

sition to hold their ground, another volley was poured into them by the enemy, and our whole force then rapidly retreated to the Rappahannock river. The rebel forces followed hotly after; but at the moment when they thought they had driven us pell-mell over the river, and the capture of the railroad bridge must be an easy affair, the fire of two batteries—Matthews's Pennsylvania and Thompson's Maryland—was poured into their faces with terrific effect. Their impulsive advance was checked on the instant, and the exultant yells died upon their lips. In haste they retired from their exposed situation where they stood to the cover of a thick wood, which skirted the level plain at a distance of a half mile from the river. Their pieces not having been brought forward they could not reply to our fire, so their column moved to the left under cover of the woods, with a view of flanking us by effecting a crossing at one of the fords between Rappahannock Bridge and the Warrenton Sulphur Springs. Their design having been anticipated, was baffled by Gen. Pope, who pushed his column a corresponding distance along the north bank of the river, and guarded each ford with three batteries to command it in front and from either side. The two armies were kept thus moving all Thursday, each of the two able players at this grand game of war seeking to checkmate his antagonist without bringing on a serious engagement before his forces were fully massed. An attempt was made down at Kelly's Ford—on the left of our line—to cross and turn our position, but this was effectually foiled by Gen. Reno, who showed no force until he had lured the enemy into the place he desired, and then suddenly opened fire with his batteries, and then followed it up with a cavalry charge, which put the foe to flight, and determined him to make no more attempts that day to cross at Kelly's Ford.

THE GREAT CANNONADE OF FRIDAY.

In the course of Thursday most of our forces crossed the Rappahannock and were stretched along the northeasterly bank some eight or ten miles. Early Friday morning the main body of the enemy advanced to the southwest bank, and commenced a cannonade along the whole line which was replied to by our batteries, the fire being kept up throughout the day.

GENERAL SIGEL ACROSS THE RIVER.

Between 8 and 9 o'clock in the forenoon, the fire opposite Gen. Sigel's corps having lulled a little, this enterprising commander determined to feel the strength of the enemy across the river. Accordingly he ordered Gen. Carl Schurz to reconnoiter with his Division, and, if possible, to cross the river. Schurz's division comprises two brigades, of which he took only the first, Gen. Bohnen's, for the reconnoissance. The 74th Pennsylvania was sent over first, the men wading breast deep through the water, holding their pieces and ammunition above their heads to keep them dry. The 8th Virginia and 61st Ohio followed and some time after McLean's Brigade was sent to support them in their engagement with the enemy. Schurz's crossing was unopposed. He kept on up the opposite bank, and out upon the level ground, and went more than a mile before his pickets came face to face with the enemy's. As soon as our fellows saw the "gray backs," they fired, but the rebels, instead of standing ground or making a show of force, fell back, in no very leisurely manner either, for half a mile. Sigel followed a while, until it was evident that they wished to entrap him into an ambush, when he halted and took up a fine position in the edge of some heavy timber, the approaches to which were over open fields. Their design foiled, the enemy had no choice but to face about and attack Schurz in his own position, which they did in force. The fight raged with great fury till 6 o'clock in the evening when, Sigel's object having been accomplished, and Schurz's force not being sufficient to hold his extremely advanced position, our troops were withdrawn to the north bank of the river. They were hotly pursued to the very water's edge by the enemy, who poured in their volleys during the passage through the ford. All of our killed and wounded were brought safely across, and a small number of prisoners (not five whole regiments, as one report has it). That General Sigel should have come safely through the day himself is truly remarkable, for he exposed himself in a most reckless manner wherever he thought it necessary to do so, and in the

final grand fusillade he was in the midst of a real storm of bullets.

Brigadier-General Bohnen, however, was killed while waving his sword and cheering on his men.

On Friday evening Fitz John Porter's corps of McClellan's army joined General Pope.

GENERAL POPE LOSES HIS PRIVATE PAPERS.

On Friday evening about half past eight, a band of some 250 guerrillas made a successful raid on Catlett's Station, a point on the railroad 13 miles northeast from the Rappahannock, and thus in the rear of our army. The devoted band dashed in upon our small collection of men and wagons, and stampeding a lot of sutlers and servants and teamsters, burned seven wagons, ran off a number of horses, and took about a hundred prisoners. The most serious part of the business is that they took Gen. Pope's personal baggage and moneys, and all his official papers, correspondence, &c., which happened to be in one of the wagons which had been sent to the rear.

All the private papers and letters of Gen. Pope, copies of dispatches and reports, memoranda relating to the campaign and to the army, copies of telegrams sent, all dispatches received from the President, Halleck and the War Department, orders issued to Generals of corps and divisions, all maps and topographical charts, containing information of the greatest value; in a word, the whole history and plan of the campaign, the numbers and disposition of troops, all are revealed to the enemy by this disaster. Its seriousness can hardly be estimated. It is taking the rebel General into the confidence of Halleck, and may render it necessary to change the whole campaign.

THE CANNONADE CONTINUED ON SATURDAY.

On Saturday there was an artillery duel all along the opposing lines. The ball was opened at our center, and the firing extended not only up the river toward Sigel, but down toward the railroad bridge, where we occupied two hills across the river. It had been raining the evening before and almost all night, and the red waters of the Rappahannock had so swollen as to carry away the bridge above Barnett's Ford and the debris lodged against the lower one in such masses that there was great danger of its being carried away. Our advanced position had become very insecure, and it was accordingly determined to abandon it. The movement was executed in perfect order. Matthews's and Thompson's Batteries, supported by the 12th and 13th Massachusetts and 11th Pennsylvania, were safely withdrawn to this side of the river, while a company of Pennsylvania riflemen and a section of Matthews's guns held the position until the last man and last gun was safely brought over. New positions were taken on this side, from which the old ones could be entailed, and on the rebels appearing in strong force a terrific cannonade was opened upon them by Matthews's, Hall's, Thompson's and Leprier's Batteries of Rickett's Division, which caused great loss to the enemy. Every attempt to plant a battery on the abandoned eminences was repulsed with great slaughter, and the enemy were fairly driven back to the woods.

As on Thursday and Friday, so on Saturday, the enemy kept working up toward Warrenton White Sulphur Springs, on the south side of the Rappahannock, with the view of flanking us, and we moved further and further away from the railroad to baffle their design. As on preceding days, so on Saturday, the grand artillery duel went on from right to left and from left to right, the cannonade being heavier now at McDowell's position, now at Sigel's, now at Banks's. We were guarding, and successfully guarding, the whole river bank, and all the fords from Kelly's to Warrenton, and the enemy, with an army of 100,000 to 150,000, had been held in check by Pope with a much inferior numerical force. Their great game was to turn our position, take us in rear, whip us, and then rush on with streaming flags to Washington. Ours the desperate task of showing fight, and yet not fighting, of playing with our monstrous antagonist until he lost his golden time, and until our reinforcements from Fredericksburg, the Peninsula and the North would so strengthen us that we could crush his armies and capture his capital. If we could save ourselves until Saturday night, we would be safe. And the greatest crisis of the war occurred between Thursday morning and Saturday night. It is past, and we are safe. Again we have the announcement that Washington is safe.

PARTICULARS OF THE CROSSING.

Gen. Pope's position at the railway bridge across the Rappahannock—the position deemed to be of greatest strength along the river was attacked in force on Saturday morning. The hill, redoubt and block-house on the southern bank, had been held up to that time by a portion of Gen. Hartsuff's brigade, the 12th and thirteenth Massachusetts and two batteries of artillery. The bridge had not been destroyed—was considered impregnable. But with the swelling stream came down so much timber that the bridge was endangered. Gen. Pope therefore determined to withdraw his forces on the opposite bank and destroy the bridge. The movement was accomplished in order and without loss, and the bridge was burnt. But the position which was thus abandoned was valuable to the enemy not less than to us, and when its evacuation was discovered, the rebels immediately advanced in force to occupy it.

On this side the Rappahannock, and to the right of the railway, is another hill and redoubt—the hill of about the same height with the other and commanding the ground beyond. From this hill and from the high ground adjacent, the advance of the enemy was met by a heavy fire of artillery. They moved in line of brigade and with successive masses steadily advancing, covered also by their own artillery, pushed forward in spite of losses that must have been immense, and possessed themselves of the hill. They were driven from it more than once, and so long as our artillery kept its position could not retain it. But it was discovered that our batteries were enfiladed by a distant fire from the other side, and they were finally moved to a more secure position.

STRUGGLE OF THE ENEMY TO CROSS THE RAPPAHANNOCK.

All through the three days of Thursday, Friday and Saturday vast masses of the enemy were making most desperate efforts to cross the Rappahannock at all the fords along the stream for fifteen miles. But at all points the passage was successfully disputed by our batteries, and during Saturday so many of McClellan's troops arrived upon the ground that our army is now considered sufficient to cope with the whole rebel force.

GENERAL McCLELLAN'S MOVEMENTS.

Our last week's account left Gen. McClellan's army at Yorktown on the 17th of August. At this point it was surrounded by the intrenchments thrown up by the rebels, and under the secure protection of these fortifications it was embarked on board a great number of transports, for conveyance down the York river, and up the Chesapeake Bay, and the Potomac. Some of the divisions were landed at Aqua Creek, where they would be only 14 miles by railroad north of the Rappahannock, some were landed at Alexandria, and others continued six miles still farther up the Potomac to Washington city. On the 22d Gen. Kearney's division landed at Alexandria, and the river was then black with transports. Those which landed at Alexandria were immediately forwarded by railroad southwardly to join Gen. Pope's army on the Rappahannock, 51 miles distant, where they began to arrive on Friday evening, Aug. 23d, as we have already stated. It is understood that a sufficient force was left at Yorktown to hold that place, and thus the disastrous campaign of the peninsula was brought to an end.

GUERRILLA OPERATIONS AT THE WEST.

The States of Missouri, Kentucky and Tennessee continue to be infested with numerous small predatory bands of rebels.

On the 24th of August Major Leppert, with two hundred men, met a body of rebels three hundred and fifty strong in Missouri, between Bloomfield and Cape Girardeau, and after a fierce engagement routed them. Thirty were killed, fifty wounded, and sixteen taken prisoners. A number of horses, several wagons, a quantity of sidearms, ammunition and their camp equipage were taken. The rebels scattered in utter confusion through the woods, and it is not probable they will again join together. Parties of national troops, thoroughly equipped for guerrilla chasing, are after other rebel bands. General Blunt has driven three famous guerrilla leaders, Coffee, Quantrall, and Rains, out of Missouri into Arkansas. On the 24th of August, two hundred guerrillas, encamped on the Shelby farm, six miles from Danville, Ky., and near the line between Boyle and Lincoln counties, were eating and feeding their

horses, when the Harrodsburg and Danville Home Guard, sixty strong, surprised them, killing three and wounding eight, some of them fatally, and took thirty horses. The Federal loss was one killed and two wounded.

ATTACK ON FORT DONELSON.

A special dispatch to the Cincinnati *Commercial* from the chaplain of the Seventy-first Ohio regiment, dated Fort Donelson, 25th ult., says that the rebels under Col. Woodward, the same who took Clarksville, made an attack on the fort, and were repulsed with the loss of thirty killed and wounded. Col. Woodward's horse was killed under him, and his saddle and pistols are now in our possession. The rebels sent a flag of truce previous to the attack, and demanded a surrender. The question was put to the officers, and every man voted "No." The force of the rebels consisted of four hundred and fifty infantry, three hundred and thirty-five cavalry and two field pieces. The fort was under the command of Major Hart, with four companies of the Seventy-first Ohio regiment—Colonel Rodney Mason's regiment.

INDIAN MASSACRES IN MINNESOTA.

The Governor of Minnesota has issued the following proclamation:—

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER, ST. PAUL, August 21, 1862.

The Sioux Indians upon our Western frontier have risen in large bodies, attacked the settlements, and are murdering men, women and children. The rising appears concerted, and extends from Fort Ripley to the Southern boundary of the State.

In this extremity, I call upon the militia of the valley of the Minnesota, and the counties adjoining the frontier, to take horses, and arm and equip themselves, taking with them subsistence for a few days, and at once report, separately or in squads, to the officer commanding the expedition now moving up the Minnesota river to the scene of hostilities. The officer commanding the expedition has been clothed with full power to provide for all exigencies that may arise.

Measures will be taken to subvert the forces so raised. This outbreak must be suppressed, and in such manner as will forever prevent its repetition.

I earnestly urge upon the settlers of the frontier that, while taking all proper precautions for the safety of their families and homes, they will not give way to any unnecessary alarm. A regiment of infantry, together with three hundred cavalry, have been ordered to their defence, and, with the volunteer troops now being raised, the frontier settlements will speedily be placed beyond danger.

ALEXANDER RAMSEY.

Editors in the vicinity express the opinion that this rising of the Indians is the result of rebel machinations; the Indian war being designed to keep at home a considerable portion of the military force of the frontier States.

A Suggestion for National Defence and Economy

Much has been said and written in regard to our national defences, and especially naval defence and protection; but as economy is to be hereafter a national necessity, I deem it a great desideratum if our naval arm can be made to command respect abroad without an immense annual outlay, to keep in commission such unwieldy iron clad ships as our transatlantic neighbors are now putting afloat. They certainly are not needed in times of peace, and they subject the national treasury to an immense drain to counteract the destructive elements of exposure. To obviate this serious difficulty with wet, ill ventilated and expensive vessels, I would recommend that a number of invulnerable iron clad gunboats or batteries for specific harbor and sea coast defence, and also a few larger or sea service ships be constructed at a first cost of from three to five hundred thousand dollars each for the gunboats, and eight to ten hundred thousand each for seaservice ships. Have them put in perfect order for use, armed and proved. Then have each one hauled up on launching ways, in a secure situation in the different sea ports and naval stations along our coast, where emergency or convenience for their care might require them. Have them thoroughly cleaned, oiled, painted and housed, and let a practical engineer be attached to each vessel to keep it clean and free from rust or accident, and ready for launching.

We would then have for years to come, and ever ready at a few days' notice, a powerful fleet of gunboats distributed at all available points for the invasion of our vast coast line, of a kind able to cope with anything that can cross the ocean, with nothing required but their crews, ammunition, provision and fuel. A fleet of a hundred of such gunboats at a first cost of \$50,000,000, with an annual expense of \$100,000 for keeping in order, would present a wonderful bulwark against foreign intervention.

For all the practical purposes of a peace establishment we can retain our present frigates and wooden gunboats as far more suitable, safe and convenient in times of peace, than the heavy, unwieldy, ill ventilated (if invulnerable) and expensive iron-clads. Such a dormant navy if properly built and cared for, will not rot or rust out in a hundred years; while our active wooden walls and well skilled officers and gunners will reflect abroad as brilliant moral light from our well housed iron navy at home as would radiate from iron walls in commission. In addition to the heavy armament of our harbor ports, the improvements lately made in casting large ordnance by core cooling, will no doubt be soon extended so as to admit of casting 30-inch mortars. Such a mortar located behind strong works commanding the narrow channels of our principal harbor to throw shells weighing 1,200 lbs., and charged with 200 lbs. of powder with inextinguishable fuse, would either destroy a fleet attempting to pass, by dropping its shells on their decks, or they would act as torpedoes by exploding on the bed of the channel, under or near the passing vessels.

A mortar of 36 inches was made a few years since in England by shrinking bars and bands together; it soon became rickety by the fierce concussion, and the project was given up as a failure. A solid casting center cooled, would no doubt have stood the test. Let us have the great mortars. All that our country could desire to make it feel safe from external encroachment, is to have the certain knowledge that it is always ready for any emergency.

G. D. H.

The Salt Wells of Michigan.

There are six wells near Grand Rapids, which vary in depth from 400 to 500 feet. On the Saginaw river there are eight salt wells, varying from 350 to 800 feet in depth. The basin in which these salt springs are found is of great extent. In this basin the strata are made up of a series of salt bearing shales of the maximum thickness of 184 feet.

The annual consumption of salt in the United States for the year 1859, is estimated at 52½ lbs. per capita, or in the aggregate, about 30,692,000 bushels. Of this amount not quite 50 per cent is of domestic manufacture—the balance being an imported article. There is still a considerable margin to be filled up by our home produces of salt to supply the entire demand.

London Subterranean Railways.

Several miles of the underground railway under the streets of London are completed, a locomotive is on the track, and the whole will be opened to the public on the 1st of October next. The London *Times* states that the underground locomotive used condenses its steam and emits no smoke. The passenger carriages are lighted with gas, the tunnel is also lighted with gas, and is well ventilated and dry. It is intended to run trains every ten minutes during the day, and the fares are to be lower than those of omnibuses for the same distance. In second-class carriages the fares are to be four cents for about four miles, and one train morning and evening is to run for two cent fares.

PRUNING EVERGREENS.—The lowest boughs of a tree or bush should be left longer than those above them, if only the fraction of an inch, and the rule holds good from bottom boughs to the topmost ones. If the boughs or branches in any part of the tree or bush are allowed to get longer than those below them, the longest will throw off the drops when it rains, and shade those from the sun; and when the sun and rain are kept from an evergreen bough it languishes and dies by inches.

THE amount of shipping in 1846 which entered and cleared from British ports was 12,415,586 tons, of which 3,727,438 tons were foreign; in 1860 the amount of shipping which entered and cleared was 24,689,292 tons, of which 10,774,369 tons were foreign. The increase in steam vessels has also been very great, having risen from 1,319,226 tons British and foreign in 1846, to 4,967,573 tons in 1860.

THE exports of petroleum—crude and refined—for the first half year of 1862, amounted to 4,379,669 gallons, equal to 109,492 barrels, valued at \$1,413,390.