# American Presbyterian
—AND—
GENESEE EVANGELIST.

JOHN W. MEARS, . . . Editor

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## Domestic News.

**A Battle for Six Days near Richmond.**—Events of a most important character have transpired during the past week in the vicinity of Richmond. A series of desperate and bloody contests, all of them of the proportions of great battles, has been fought between our forces and vastly superior numbers of the Rebls. For nearly a week our army has fought against overpowering numbers, and though compelled to fall back, has fought bravely, repulsing the enemy, from time to time, with great slaughter, nowhere permitting its flank to be turned or its front to be broken. Retiring by a dangerous and difficult night march, through forests and swamps, exposed to constant attack, harassed by an enemy hovering about them and constantly reinforced by innumerable and fresh troops, our brave soldiers made their way through almost inconceivable difficulties, to the point aimed at on James River, at Turkey Bridge. From this point they have fallen further back to one, it is to be presumed, more defensible, and where they can count with more certainty upon the aid of the fleet. Here, at Harrison's Bar, at the last accounts they have made a stand, and entrenching themselves, with the gunboats behind them, will be able to get the rest they so much need, and choose their own time for a renewal of the fight. We know, on the authority of some distinguished officers who reached Washington two days ago, that the line of defence from the Chickahominy to the James River is considered absolutely stronger than it was ten days ago.

The conflict, as intimated above, was brought on by a movement of General McClellan, to secure a better position beyond the Chickahominy as a base of military operations against Richmond, and to mass together his widely-scattered forces for a more practicable line of defence on the James River. The matter of first importance to our army was the saving of its immense artillery and wagon trains; its Commissary and Quartermaster stores, and whatelse of *material* had been accumulated as necessary to its subsistence and efficiency. This manœuvre, one of the most difficult for a commander to execute in the face of the enemy, was accomplished with great skill, and in an orderly manner. But certainly not without interruption on the part of the enemy who, aware of the design of the Commander-in-chief, on Thursday, June 26th, attacked our right wing near Mechanicsville. This was the beginning of a number of remarkable conflicts which continued until Tuesday evening, July 2d, when General McClellan succeeded in establishing himself in a new and much more healthy and advantageous position on the James river, where he is under the protection of our gun-boats. In all the battles the rebels outnumbered our forces two to one, and it is supposed that they brought into action no less than 185,000 men, while ours at no time reached as high as 100,000. The loss on both sides is fearful; though it is impossible to make any just calculation from the present confused descriptions. One account places it at forty-five thousand, of which our proportion is but fifteen thousand, leaving thirty thousand for the rebels.

Many wounded prisoners have been captured on both sides. On the whole, it appears from the latest accounts that the advantages of the fighting have been on our side, though fighting against fearful odds.

The correspondents of the secular papers give full and generally correct statements of the different battles and their results. We present some of these in greater detail than usual, knowing the interest our readers will feel in events of so momentous a character.

It appears that early on Thursday morning General McCall's division, which was posted a little below Mechanicsville, commenced a retrograde movement towards the position held by General Fitzjohn Porter, in the vicinity of New Bridge. McCall had scarcely joined Porter before the rebels—the divisions of Anderson, Branch, and G. V. Smith, under the command of "Stonewall" Thomas Jefferson Jackson—pushed him hard and forced him to halt and hastily form a line of battle, which was done in excellent style, the Bucktails deployed to the right and left in front as skirmishers.

Porter's division came promptly to the support of McCall, and fighting desperately, the two divisions fell back slowly towards Savage's Station, on the Richmond and York Railroad, when night came on, and the battle ceased.

Meanwhile Capt. Sawtelle, of Gen. McClellan's staff had succeeded in destroying everything in the way of buildings at White House, and, moving all the transports down the river, had the gunboats stationed so as to command every approach.

On Friday the battle was renewed with great fury by the rebels, but with different results, McCall and Porter being reinforced by most of Keyes' corps, making our defending force foot up about 40,000 men. The rebels were in turn reinforced by Longstreet's division and a division said to be improvised for Beauregard.

General McClellan was present on Friday, and personally manoeuvred the troops, handling them in a masterly manner, and especially supervising the artillery.

The cannonade lulled after about five hours' fighting, and both armies seemed to be recoiling for a desperate spring at each other, when the rebel kirmishers, finding no enemy east of them, changed front and advanced some miles in front of their position.

An immense weight of canister and grape was thrown among them, and hundreds of their number were seen to bite the dust, The rebels, however, were not checked by our artillery, and onward they come toward our left.

Every man stood at his post resolved to do his utmost to repel the enemy. Volley after volley was exchanged, but neither side wavered. At last the rebels poured a tremendous volley into our ranks, which thinned them out to an alarming extent. After a while, the superior numbers of the rebels also began to tell, and it became evident that our troops would soon be obliged to give way. The troops under command of General McCall were nearly exhausted, having been in the battle of the preceding day, and having passed the night without sleep. Our men fought well, but they could not do impossibilities. One man could not contend against three, and come out the winner. The left wing began to fall back. *The command for the troops to retire in order across the Chickahominy was given, and the regiments commenced moving in that direction.* It was nearly dark. The fight had been desperate, and the enemy did not seem inclined to press hard.

With the assistance of the reinforcements previously mentioned, another line of battle was formed, about a half mile in the rear of the first position. The object, however, was more for the purpose of covering the retreat than for renewing the contest. The battle was ended.

A correspondent of the New York *Tribune* speaking of the battle, says:

"The battle of day before yesterday—I call it the battle of Gaines Mills—now that 48 hours have passed, is found to be one of even greater magnitude than we thought when we saw the angry sun go down on our beaten—if not beaten, say shattered columns. The numbers engaged were, as I then estimated, 30,000 upon our side. Upon the enemy's fully 75,000. We have brought across the Chickahominy 1000 wounded. The killed and wounded left upon the field cannot be less than 4500, and still there are 3000 to be classed as missing. Some of these last will come in, but as many others will straggle into the hands of the enemy. Not far from twenty guns were left on the field. Each of these estimates is something less than my fears.

"And the terrible fighting—the tornadoes of musketry, and volleys of thunderbolts from hundreds of cannon—

"The scream of shot, and burst of shell,
And bellowing of the mortars,"

these have not been paralleled by this army, despite Williamsburg and Fair Oaks. The swollen list of martyrs is the terribly sad evidence.

"In the early part of the day one of our men captured a rebel knapsack, hung to which was half a skull, used evidently as a drinking vessel. An inscription upon it stated that it came from Bull Run. During the stampede, for a moment the attention of hundreds was attracted to a horse galloping around, carrying a man's leg in the stirup—the left leg, booted and spurred. It was a splendid horse gayly caparisoned.

"Instances of extraordinary gallantry are not wanting. Gen. Butterfield led his men like another Ney, and with the Marshal's good fortune, escaped without a scratch. A shattered scabbard, clothes torn with bullets, and a hat wrenched from his head and demolished by the fragment of a shell—the General might predicate a fatalistic belief in his "star." He was also one of several instances whose officers left sick beds rather than their commands should go to the field without them.

"The French Princes—the Prince de Joinville and the two young men—rode upon the field in hot haste during the engagement, and seemed ubiquitous, as they certainly were daring and efficient, especially in rallying and reforming the men as they came out of the woods.

"The circumstances under which Lieut. J. Howe, of the 3d New Jersey, met his death, show him a hero. After the panic, he had gone down upon the plain, found a portion of Company H, of his regiment, and with them, as a nucleus, was rallying to his colors a provisional regiment from the mass of stragglers. He had gathered several hundred, was addressing them in stirring words, and pointing to the flag, when a conical rifled shot struck him in the breast, passing through his body and into the ground at the feet of the men. It was the only cannon shot that fell in that vicinity."

The affair on Saturday, June 28, is described as partaking more of the nature of a battle than the engagements of Thursday and Friday. Time and again, vast hordes of rebels moved up in solid columns upon our troops, but our regular batteries as often mowed them down in a most destructive manner. Steady discharges of shell, grape, and canister in regular salvos seemed to sweep down whole companies. When confusion appeared in their ranks, General Meagher's Irish brigade was ordered to charge, which they did in the most gallant manner, and with excellent effect.

Now the Pennsylvanians gave them the benefit of all their splendid rifles, while the batteries played upon them as before, creating sad havoc. Indeed, the slaughter upon other fields during this war has never been anything to compare to this. The rebels staggered under their losses, and our forces were advancing steadily upon them, driving them back at every point, when a staff officer rode up with an order from the commander-in-chief to Gen. Porter, directing him to fall back with his command, and cross the Chickahominy.

The order was executed in fine style, and our troops did not miss a man, the enemy being too severely punished to follow us closely.

The battle was renewed on Sabbath morning June 29th. At day light the enemy came eastward on the Williamsburg road. When they reached a point about 300 yards from our front, they were met with a terrible fire of cannon. The fight lasted from eight until 12 o'clock, during which time the rebels vainly endeavored to charge through the brigades of Burns, Dana, and Gorman.

Having held the place until, in the judgment of the Generals, our teams, heavy artillery and ambulances, were far across White Oak Swamp our troops fell back leisurely to the neighborhood of Savage's Station, and again drew up in order of action.

The battle of Savage's on the same day was more sanguinary. It commenced about five o'clock in the afternoon, and lasted till eleven o'clock at night. The Rebels, when we had fallen back from Peach Orchard, filled with large reinforcements and additional batteries, as well as with several squadrons of cavalry, towards several roads leading to the Chickahominy, and, covered by the thick timber, were enabled to remain concealed until they had reached a wheat-field that stretches from Savage's to a dense belt of woods in the direction of the farms of Dr. Trent and Messrs. Mickey, Dudly and Couch. Suddenly appearing out of the edge of the timber. they opened with rifled cannon upon our forces, drawn up in full view to the south of the railroad. Directly they ran out three batteries to commanding points in the wheat field, and opened a rapid enfilading fire of shell and grape.

Some of the sharpest infantry fighting of the war ensued, in which parts of Sedgwick's Richardson's Hooker's Kearney's and Smith's divisions engaged with various success. The Rebels came determinedly across the field, firing as they advanced, until General Sumner ordered our troops up at double quick to a charge. About four thousand of them went off at once with a roar that might have drowned the musketry:

Darkness came but put no end to the carnage. The firing continued making the night hideous. At midnight orders came for our wearied but still undaunted soldiers, to retire from Savage's across White Oak Swamp. The battle was renewed on Monday morning and was of a most determined and bloody character. The rebels met with a decided repulse. One of the Richmond papers admits a defeat, and says their loss was terrible—one division which had gone in the fight with 14,000 could only muster 6000 fit for duty afterwards.

One of the secular papers gives the following account of it:

Another tremendous battle, more terrible carnage. yesterday. From Wednesday to Monday has this army been fighting—a six days' battle, or, if you please, forty battles.

Early Monday morning the enemy appeared in force at White Oak Swamp, the position we had assumed during the night previous. In this retreat—why hesitate to use that word?—he has not, in a single instance, long hesitated to attack—he did not now. By noon the action had commenced—the battle of White Oak Swamp. Musketry had not ceased when I left the field at 10 P.M. It will scarcely rank in magnitude with Gaines Hill, and yet we did not suffer more, nor cause to suffer more, at Fair Oaks.

It is impossible for me to give a circumstantial account of this battle, raging as it did ten hours and extending along a line of 2½ miles, and fought on ground such that not one-tenth of the field was in view from any one point of vision. At least three-fifths of what remains of McClellan's army was engaged or in immediate reserve. Heintzelman's, Summer's, and Franklin's corps were thus, and a portion of each of Keyes's and Porter's. More could scarcely have been brought into an action had the fate of the country depended on the one effort. Not so many can be brought into line to-day. And yet we only barely held our ground—perhaps not quite.

I shall have to hurry on to the results. Our loss of yesterday may be estimated at 6,000. Many of these are prisoners. The Pennsylvania Reserve were again in the thickest. This morning they do not muster 3,000 men. Add to these 1,000 who are straggling and will yet come in, and the number is less than half that they began with at Beaver Dam. They lost severely there, they were more than decimated the next day at Gaines Mills, and yesterday they shrank to this small measure. Their leader, Gen. McCall, is severely wounded and in the enemy's hands. Our Brigade Commander, Gen. J. J. Reynolds, is a prisoner at Richmond, another, Gen. Geo. G. Meade, lies in a tent near us seriously wounded. Officers of lower grade they have lost in about the same proportion. Of the Bucktail Regiment not a hundred respond to the roll-call.

And so with other divisions. For the losses of the last six days cannot be less than 15,000. It is only hoped that they will not reach 20,000.

Our Generals behaved like Napoleon's under his own eagle eye. Gen. McCall was severely wounded in the shoulder, but refused to leave the field or to dismount. At night, when the enemy had been driven back, his horse was found dead, and, this is all that is known of his fate. How Generals Richardson and Dana, always well up in the melee, escaped unhurt, seems miraculous. The same may be said of scores. Gen. Burns and Gen. Brooks were each slightly wounded, but neither so disabled as to leave the field. Col. Wyman, 16th Massachusetts, was killed late in the day, under what circumstances I cannot say; but in a brave fight it may be warranted, for such was the place he always sought. Col. Hinks, 19th Massachusetts, fought his regiment until he had less officers than companies, made two bayonet-charges, and fought his men until at length he fell wounded.

Let it be recorded here that the regiment always fights precisely like its officers. This fact recurs to me as I speak of the 19th, since that furnishes one of the most notable instances bearing on the assertion.

The varying fortunes of the field are shown by the fact that each side took guns and large numbers of prisoners. Among those taken from the enemy are Col. Lamar, of Georgia, ex-M.C., the noted Secessionist of long standing, and Col. Pendleton, of a Louisiana regiment, formerly of Cincinnati. A whole brigade was captured by Heintzelman—a small brigade, 1600 strong. Perhaps 3000 were taken during the day.

That the enemy's loss of the last week more than exceeds our own, is as nearly certain as anything can be of which there is no direct proof. He has lost fewer by capture than we, but his killed and wounded must fully balance the account. By fighting the enemy in chosen positions, where the artillery could play havoc with all who should attempt to approach, we piled his dead in winrows. Our superiority in artillery has saved the army from utter annihilation. And yet the most tenacious struggles have been over these very guns. The enemy never fails to attempt their capture—evidently having a wholesome sense of their value.

Yesterday the gunboats participated to the extent of silencing a Rebel battery they had succeeded in getting into play upon our baggage trains.

The salvation of this decimated, exhausted, and depressed army is a question of supplies and re-enforcements, immediate and heavy. If these weary thousands could get twenty-four hours rest their safety would be assured, but if left alone, any cessation of attack and repulse until the final catastroph will not be permitted.

The battle was renewed the next day, July 2nd, with renewed success to the Union arms. McClellan had placed his artillery in such a position that it mowed the rebels down by the thousands. It is believed that their loss was fully *ten thousand men in Tuesday's fight.* They brought up brigade after brigade, and division after division, but as fast and as dense as they came, they were repulsed. In some places the Rebels stood erect and used the piled-up bodies of their comrades as breastworks.

Our artillery used little else but grape and cannister, and its practice told with horrible effect upon the ranks of the Rebels.

Since then, according to the telegraph, there has been no fighting. Large reinforcements have been hurried forward to General McClellan, and there seems to be no doubt about his being able to hold his present position against any force of the rebels.

Despatches from General McClellan, dated the 4th of July, have been received, which give further information in regard to the late battles before Richmond. There had been no fighting since Tuesday evening. On that day the rebels were repulsed with great slaughter, having lost 10,000 men. Our forces were not beaten in any conflict, nor could they be driven from the field by the efforts of the enemy. No guns were lost but those—twenty-five in number—which were taken in the fight of Friday, when General McCall's division was overwhelmed by superior numbers. In addition to the above, a correspondent of the *Philadelphia Press* states that General McClellan's furthest advanced position was within twenty-five miles of Richmond, and he was rapidly pushing his army forward, driving the enemy at all points. His army had completely recovered from the fatigue caused by the retreat, and he had been strongly reinforced. Gunboats accompanied his advance, shelling the woods, and scattering the enemy, and his main forces were following at safe supporting distances. It is the opinion of competent persons that the movement of McClellan, by which he has turned his army entirely round, though involving retreat and an immense loss, is "one of the most extraordinary and brilliant which history records. A secular paper says:

"The base of his operations is the true and natural one, one that can advance with our successes. Immediately after the battle of Williamsburg, McClellan would have followed up the line of James river, no doubt, but for the presence of the *Merrimac*, now blown up, and the difficulty of crossing the Chickahominy at its mouth in front of an opposing army. But both these difficulties have now, however, been overcome. The entire army is now (as it never all was before) on the Richmond side of the Chickahominy. It has cost McClellan dear, but that advantage he has gained. He was indeed exposed to this danger, that a defeat might thereby have caused the surrender of the entire army or its destruction in the Chickahominy. But General McClellan had faith in his men, and in his own skill, took the hazard, and has won the advantage of it both as to health and safety."

**Address of General McClellan to his Soldiers.**—On the anniversary of our National Independence (July 4th) General McClellan made the following spirited address to his soldiers, who through the last ten days had fought the enemy with such wonderful bravery. It is dated Harrison's Landing.

"*Soldiers of the Army of the Potomac:*—Your achievements of the last ten days have illustrated the valor and endurance of the American soldier. Attacked by superior forces and without hope of reinforcements, you have succeeded in changing your base of operations by a flank movement, always regarded as the most hazardous of military expedients. You have saved all your material, all your trains, and all your guns, except a few lost in battle—taking in return guns and colors from the enemy.

"Upon your march you have been assailed day after day, with desperate fury by many of the same race and nation, skillfully massed and led.

"Under every disadvantage of number, and necessarily of position also, you have in every conflict beaten back your foes with enormous slaughter.

"Your conduct ranks you among the celebrated armies of history.

"No one will now question that each of you may always, with pride, say 'I belong to the Army of the Potomac.'

"You have reached this new base complete in organization, and unimpaired in spirit.

"The enemy may at any time attack you. We are prepared to meet them. I have personally established your lines. Let them come, and we will convert their repulse into a final defeat.

"Your Government is strengthening you with the resources of a great people.

"On this, our nation's birthday, we declare to our foes who are rebels against the best interests of mankind, that this army shall enter the capital of the so called confederacy. That our national constitution shall prevail, and that the Union, which can alone insure internal peace and external security to each State, must and shall be preserved, cost what it may in time, treasure, or blood."

**Capture of Vicksburg.**—Vicksburg has been captured by our naval forces. The attack began on Thursday, the 26th day of June. On that day Porter's fleet began to shell the upper battery below the town. This was continued all day, and renewed on Friday, and in the afternoon was directed on the town, over which the shells were plainly seen to burst. This continued until 4 o'clock when it ceased. During the bombardment the rebel batteries replied feebly, firing inaccurately.

Half an hour after the cessation of the bombardment, the rebel water battery opened on the mortar fleet, which replied until the battery ceased firing. At 8 o'clock fire was opened from the entire fleet on the town and continued an hour.

On the next morning at 4 o'clock the bombardment was renewed, during which eight of Farragut's vessels passed before the batteries without sustaining serious damage.

The city of Vicksburg must have been damaged, as great conflagrations were seen in numerous places.

**Congressional.**—In the Senate, Saturday, Mr. Grimes from the Committee on the District of Columbia, reported a bill in relation to Schools for Colored Children in Washington.

On motion of Mr. Trumbull, the bill in relation to election of Representatives to Congress from single districts was taken up, and, after debate was postponed.

On motion of Mr. Foster, the general pension bill was taken up. Several amendments of the Committee were concurred in.

In the House, same day, Mr. Wickliffe (Kentucky), moved to amend to reconsider the vote by which General Hunter's reply to inquiries as to the organization of negro regiments was ordered to be printed.

Quite an interesting discussion ensued on this motion, Mr. Wickliffe addressed the House on the subject. Instead of organizing and parading negroes General Hunter ought to have prepared his troops to prevent the retreat from James Island. It was a miserable policy to muster runaway blacks into service. If twenty millions of freemen were not able to suppress a rebellion of six millions of white men, let the acknowledgment be at once made. The recommendation to the Border Slave States to emancipate their negroes, and the design to pass the Confiscation bill, have not spared the South.

He found fault with the conduct of the war.

Mr. Stevens wished the Secretary had replied by saying, "I have sent arms and clothing South, with orders to supply the loyal men there." If this answer had been given, it would have been in accordance with what he supposed were the Secretary's sentiments. The employment of blacks was carrying out the usage of all civilized nations. Nothing could be produced from history to show the contrary. The usage was to liberate the slaves and take them into service to defeat the enemy. During the revolution, the blacks were used by Washington as soldiers in Rhode Island. Jackson did the same thing.

Mr. Lovejoy, by permission of Mr. Stevens occupied the floor a short time, and read from the proclamation of Washington and Jackson, in support of Mr. Stevens' position, and to show the noble enthusiasm of the colored soldiers, impelling to great deeds.

Mr. Sedgwick (N.Y.) also read from a paper furnished him by the librarian of the State of New York, to the effect that Spain, Portugal, Brazil, Great Britain, Turkey, etc., had employed soldiers without regard to color, including blacks.

Mr. Diven (N.Y.) regarded the muster of blacks into the service as highly important and desirable. He had been endeavoring for weeks past to introduce a bill for this purpose. In reply to Mr. Bingham he said he provided in the bill for the liberty of all thus employed.

**More Volunteers.**—At the request of the Governors of eighteen States, who in a letter to the President says, "that the time has arrived for prompt and vigorous measures to be adopted by the people in support of the great interests committed to your charge;" the latter has decided to call into service an additional force of three hundred thousand men. He says:—"I trust that they may be enrolled without delay, so as to bring this unnecessary and injurious civil war to a speedy and satisfactory conclusion."

**Collection of Taxes in Rebellious States.**—The President, in accordance with the provisions of the act for the collection of direct taxes in the insurrectionary districts within the United States, has issued a proclamation declaring in what States and parts of States insurrection exists, namely: South Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, Arkansas, Tennessee, North Carolina and Virginia, excepting from the last certain named western counties.

These States and parcels of States are now charged with their respective portions of said direct tax; and the same, together with the penalty, are a lien thereon, without any other or further proceeding whatever.

**Items.**—Great preparations are being made by the enemy to defend Mobile.——Five hundred and thirty-three rebel prisoners were captured by General McClellan's army in the recent battles.——Napoleon III. is about to send a large French fleet to our waters.——There are fresh rumors of foreign intervention.——Several State Governors have issued calls for more volunteers.——Halleck telegraphs that seven hundred and twenty-eight of our cavalry defeated and drove back with considerable loss, about four thousand seven hundred of the rebels, near Boonesville, Miss.

## Deaths.

At North Dana Massachusetts, on Friday the 27th June, FRANK WARREN, infant son of Edward L. and H. Louisa Barnes of New York, aged 5 months and 20 days.


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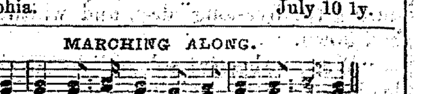

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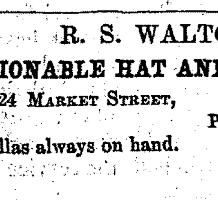

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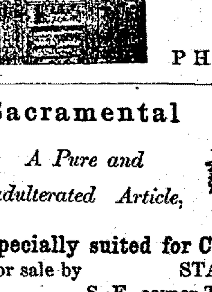

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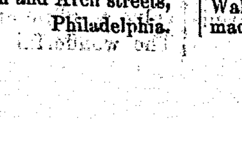

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