

News of the Week.

THE WAR.

ARMY OF THE POTOMAC.

While the movement which we announced last week as being in progress in this army has not yet resulted in the consummation of the popular idea of its mission—the capture of Richmond—it has accomplished what was, perhaps, as important a work in the eyes of its great leader. Gen. Grant has been accused of a reckless carelessness of the lives of his men; but any candid man who studies carefully his late movement on the 29th and 30th of September, will be ready to confess that this is a gross slander. Previous to the movement, the distance from where our army lay on the North side of the James to Richmond, by the nearest route, was about thirteen miles. Over this entire distance the rebels had erected a line of works many of them of a very formidable character, and it was clearly the intention of Gen. Lee to make Grant fight his way through and over these works to the rebel capital. In this case, however, as in many more which we could enumerate during this campaign, the "muddaill" of an Illinois tanner, has proved too much of a match for the aristocratic and chivalrous Virginian. Gen. Grant knew all about this line of fortifications, and he had no idea of rushing madly against them, while they remained any other way of accomplishing his object. Watching, waiting and manœuvring for his opportunity, he moved two of his corps in the very nick of time, and at once charge, overcame six of the thirteen miles, giving Lee no time to mass his forces behind the line of defence thus wrested from his possession. He has hence accomplished in six or eight hours of one day, what Lee intended should delay him for as many weeks, if not months. The same thing has been done on the Petersburg end of the line. The movement in progress now, the details of which the Secretary of War assures us are favorable, though not yet proper for publication, is for the possession of what is known as the South side or Lynchburg Railroad. To prevent the accomplishment of that object, Lee had a series of strong works thrown up, every one of which must have been contested to the bitter end, forcing Grant to fight his way by slow approaches or by desperate assaults over them all. By his skillful movement Gen. Grant so far deceived Lee that he was in doubt as to the real points of the attacks of the 29th and 30th September, and the rebel commander was obliged to move his troops toward the centre of his line, so that they could be pushed to either end, as the exigency might demand. But when the attack of the Union army fell upon both, he was more than ever confounded, and each flank being weak, he lost valuable ground on both, and thereby sustained a heavy defeat. Let it be remembered that Gen. Grant accomplished all this with the loss of comparatively few men. No severe fighting has occurred in this army since September 30th. The ground then gained by our troops has been firmly held, and as we have already intimated a movement is now on foot looking to the possession of the most important line of communication the rebels have.

Attack on Ayres' Division.

On the morning of the 1st inst., the enemy advanced up the Squirrel Hill Road, and made a furious attack on Gen. Ayres' Division, of the 5th corps, which was holding the right of the new extension of our line; a considerable interval existing between the two. The attacking column consisted of Health's Division, Hill's Corps, and a brigade of (said to be) dismounted cavalry. With this force they advanced resolutely forward, and attacked Gen. Ayres in his intrenchments. The latter, however, was fully prepared for them, and gave them such a reception as instantly checked their advance, and compelled them to retreat with the utmost precipitation. The punishment they received was very severe, as is attested by the large numbers of their dead which still lie in the woods in front of our works. Our picket line was thrown forward as the enemy fled, and followed them closely to within sight of their own works. This attack was a desperate endeavor to regain a portion of the line of works taken from them the day before, including the fort furthest on the right. Its failure seemed to satisfy them of the impracticability of the enterprise, for the attempt has not since been renewed.

Narrow Escape of General Meade.

On the morning of the 2d, Gen. Meade narrowly escaped a serious wound. He, with his Staff and Generals Griffin and Bartlett, of the Fifth Corps, with the respective staffs were collected near the Boswell House on Gen. Griffin's line. A rebel battery, which was shelling one of our, not far distant from where this group of horsemen were standing, threw an accidental shot among them. It grazed the boot of Gen. Meade, leaving its mark there, clipped off a lock of hair from the tail of Gen. Humphreys' horse, passed harmlessly between Generals Griffin and Bartlett, and fell to the ground without injuring any one.

ARMY OF THE JAMES.

The rebels have been trying to stir up Gen. Butler, and in so doing they have been very much worsted. To be defeated by the "beast" as they term Gen. Butler, must be more galling to the rebels than to be defeated by any other of the Union Generals. This is so, not only because Butler is personally obnoxious to them, but because a large portion of his army is composed of negro troops, many of whom have the satisfaction very frequently of bringing in their old masters as captives. Gen. Butler's army occupies the position lately taken from the enemy at Chapin's Farm, which is our nearest approach toward Richmond, on the South side, being within about five miles of the heart of the rebel capital.

Assault upon General Butler's Lines.

Under date of October 7th, Gen. Butler telegraphs Lieut-General Grant as follows: At 6:30 A. M., the enemy having moved Fields' and Hoke's Divisions from the left at Chapin's Farm around to our right at Darbytown road, attacked with spirit General Kautz's cavalry in their intrenchments and drove him back with small loss of men but with the loss of his artillery. The enemy suffered very considerable loss in his attack. The enemy then swept down the intrenchments towards Birney, who, having thrown back his right, waited their assault and repulsed it with heavy loss on the part of the enemy. The enemy in the meantime advanced toward New Market, but were met by a force at the signal tower at 3 P. M. I took the offensive, sending Birney with two divisions up the Darbytown road. The enemy has retreated as he advanced, and Birney has reached and occupied the intrenchments which the enemy took from Kautz and were fortifying for themselves. Our loss has been small, not one-eighth of the enemy's. We have about one hundred prisoners.

In a second dispatch dated on the evening of the same day, Gen. Butler says: General Birney has regained General Kautz's old position, and holds the enemy in the inner line of intrenchments around Richmond, extending from the Darbytown road to connect with Weitzel on the left near Fort Harrison. There has been no movement at Petersburg to-day. We have much the best of this days work. A thousand at least of the enemy killed and wounded, a hundred prisoners, and a bloody repulse. General Gregg, commanding Fields' division, is reported by a lady who saw the body as killed. General Birney telegraphs General Butler at a quarter past ten on the evening of the 7th: I have repulsed the attack of the enemy on our right flank, with great slaughter. The troops seem to be Fields' and Pickett's division. I send you a batch of prisoners. I am extending my right flank. The enemy seem to be entrenching on Darby road.

GENERAL SHERIDAN'S ARMY.

The last accounts we have from General Sheridan locate him at Woodstock, and everything going on well. There has been another cavalry battle in the Valley of the Shenandoah since our last issue. In this, as in all the previous battles, the rebels were totally defeated. It seems to be Gen. Sheridan's intention to draw the enemy out from his hiding place among the passes of the Blue Ridge. To this intent he has fallen back, which movement the enemy has mistaken for a retreat.

Gen. Sheridan would, doubtless, have made much better progress but for the difficulty he has experienced of getting supplies to his army, via Harpers Ferry and Winchester. It is understood that the government is about providing a better and more safe route for the transmission of supplies to this army. The first object of Sheridan's campaign in the Valley of the Shenandoah is accomplished. He has driven off Early's column, and the remnant of that recently powerful and insolent army has taken shelter among the passes of the Blue Ridge. A correspondent of the N. Y. Tribune writing under date of Oct. 4th, from Martinsburg, says: "The latest intelligence from General Sheridan is up till Saturday morning, the 1st inst. At that moment his infantry were still at Harrisonburg, while his cavalry were east of the Blue Ridge, reconnoitering in the vicinity of Charlottesville. The rebel report of a disaster to our cavalry at Swift Head Gap is untrue. Instead of meeting with a repulse we gained a victory, capturing about one hundred prisoners, and driving the rebels through the Gap which they had fortified. Rock Fish and Brown's Gap have been strongly fortified by the rebels, and are defended by considerable force. If they attempt to make a stand there it will be but a repetition of Fisher's Hill. The position is flankable on either side. A great many refugees, some rebel soldiers, and large numbers of negroes arrive here daily. General Max Weber has been ordered to report to General Sheridan."

ARMIES OF THE SOUTHWEST.

Ever since General Sherman occupied Atlanta, he has had considerable difficulty with the rebels annoying his communications in the rear. The efforts to interrupt communications have been made mostly by detached forces of the rebels, many of them mere marauding bands of guerrillas. The man who fought his way from the Chattahoochee to Atlanta, and vanquished the only considerable army the rebels had in the Southwest, is not to be moved from his purpose by any or all the guerrilla bands and leaders in the Confederacy; and so General Sherman, on learning of the operations of the rebels in his rear, took measures at once to put a stop to them. So far he has been very successful.

Battle near Altoona.

Maj-Gen. Geo. H. Thomas was sent to Louisville to organize the troops in his district and drive Forrest from our lines, while the attention of General Sherman was directed to the movements of the main rebel army in the vicinity of Atlanta. On the 4th of October the rebels had captured Big Shanty, but were followed closely up by Sherman on the 5th. On the morning of the 5th, the enemy attacked Altoona with artillery and infantry. The position was occupied by a portion of General Smith's Corps. The fight continued at intervals during the latter part of the day, and every move of the enemy was handsomely repulsed with severe loss to the rebels. In the evening they hastily retreated towards Dalton and Dallas, leaving their dead and 400 to 600 wounded in our possession. Our loss was about 300 killed, wounded and missing.

Guerilla Operations.

On the 1st of October, General Buford, with a part of Forrest's command, including all his artillery, attacked Athens, Ala., shelling the place for two hours, and demanded its surrender from the commandant, Col. Wade, of the 73d Indiana, who refused. Buford soon after retired. The rebel Captain Blackwell, on the 30th ult., surprised and captured some guards, numbering 32, at Shelbyville, Tenn., and burned the Railroad depot and a lot of arms and munitions of war. Ten of the Federal prisoners were shot by Blackwell near Fayetteville. The balance were delivered to Forrest. Six of the latter escaped and had reached Shelbyville. One hundred and fifty rebels, under Duval McNairy, attacked Lieut Blizard, of the 5th Tennessee Cavalry, in

charge of a large drove of cattle from Johnsonville, within fifteen miles of Nashville. The Federal guards numbered 60, half of whom were killed, wounded, or captured, the balance escaped. An unofficial dispatch to the war department says: From Lawrence we hear that Morgan has Forrest cornered, has captured his transportation, and that the gunboats prevent all retreat across the Tennessee. Defeat of the Rebels in West Virginia. General Burbridge makes the following report of his defeat of the enemy in West Virginia: Forcing the enemy from Clinch Mountain and Laurel Gaps, after heavy skirmishing, we met the enemy three and a half miles from Saltville, on the morning of the 2d instant, and drove him to his works around the salt-works, where he was strongly entrenched on the bluff in heavy force, under Echols, Williams, Vaughan, and it is said Breckenridge. We at once attacked him and drove him from his works on our left and centre, and held him in check on the right, and finally, in spite of artillery and superior numbers, whipped him and forced him back to his own works. In the evening our ammunition gave out, and holding the command in excellent order and spirits. The occupation of the works themselves was only prevented by the failure of ammunition. From the prisoners I learn that the enemy's force was between 6000 and 8000, and that Breckenridge was present, with 4000 from Lynchburg. My force amounted to 2500 engaged. A detachment sent to Pound Gap forced its way through, and drove Prentice, with a superior force, from his works at Gladesville, capturing several prisoners, a number of small arms, and one piece of artillery. Our loss in all is about three hundred and fifty. That of the enemy is more. I will report more fully by mail. On the morning of the 2d I received an order from General Sherman to return.

General Butler, now in command of the Army of the James, has written a letter to General Cameron on the prospects of the rebellion. We would like to give it entire, but our limited space forbids. General Butler probably knows better than any man on this side the rebel lines the actual condition of the insurgent States, and their means of further resistance. It is known that Gen. Grant trusts largely to his facilities for acquiring information—facilities which arising from his position are improved to the utmost by his extraordinary professional talents. And this is the opinion of General Butler: "We have been lying in front of Lee's army now for four months, which have by no means been spent in vain. From the examination of thousands of prisoners and deserters, and articles in the Southern newspapers, I am certain there have been months of depletion to the Southern army; that the whole arms-bearing population of the States within the rebel lines have been exhausted in the effort to recruit their forces, and the capability, if not the will, to resistance is fast dwindling away."

"After citing the rebel mode of conscripting and showing the hopeless condition to which they have been reduced for want of men, General Butler testifies to the universal conviction of the Rebels that their cause is wholly dependent for success upon the success of the Chicago Copperhead-McClellan ticket. "Add to this the concurrent testimony of prisoners, deserters, and refugees, that the rank and file of their armies are in the confident expectation and belief in the promise of their leaders, that this will be their last campaign, that the nominees of the Chicago Convention will be elected in November, and that the independence of the Confederate States will be acknowledged and a treaty of peace concluded, and you have an imperfect synopsis of the reasons why I believe the rebellion near its end."

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11.

Latest From all our Armies.

Gen. Roseau reports that Forrest escaped him by crossing the Tennessee in flat boats above and below Florence on the 6th inst., while he (Roseau) was detained by high water in Shoal creek and Elk river.

Gen. Sheridan reports that his command was at Woodstock, Va., on the 7th. He commenced moving back on the previous morning. The whole country from the Blue Ridge to the North Mountain has been made untenable for the rebel army. Our forces have destroyed over two thousand barns filled with wheat, hay and farming implements; over 70 mills filled with flour and wheat; have driven in front of the army over 400 head of stock, and have killed not less than 3000 sheep. Sheridan has not been followed by the rebels. General Sheridan telegraphs from Strasburg at midnight on the 9th that a large force of cavalry appeared in his rear on the previous day. He halted, and the next morning the enemy was attacked by Custer and Merritt, and was handsomely whipped. Merritt captured five guns and Custer six. Forty-seven wagons, ambulances, &c., and the headquarter wagons of Generals Rosser, Lomax and Wickham and Col. Holland were also captured.

General Butler, under date of Saturday, reports that our success on the 7th was a decided one, although the rebel papers claim a victory. The rebel General Gregg was killed and General Bratton was wounded. General Canby's last report states that General Steele was moving in force upon the rear of Price, towards Missouri.

General Sherman, at last accounts, was at Kenesaw, repairing the railroad between Atlanta and Alatoona. He has plenty of provisions in Atlanta, and so far as the main army is concerned, feels secure. He reports that Hood has moved rapidly back to Dallas and Vawert.

Army of the Potomac advises represent that the Fifth and Ninth Corps advanced their lines on the 8th half a mile, driving the enemy's skirmishers into their breastworks. The movement was for the purpose of feeling their strength. Our forces hold the ground gained, but as yet have made no attack on the main line. General Grant reports everything satisfactory about Petersburg. Our losses were much less than at first reported.

From Jefferson city we have official dispatches, stating that on the 8th, the rebels drew up in line of battle before our works, but after receiving a severe fire from our batteries moved off towards the west, and were followed by our forces for six miles, receiving sharp punishment.

Therebel General Lyon attacked Hopkinsville, Kentucky, on the 19th, but after a sharp fight withdrew, with a loss of eight killed and fifteen wounded.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Election in the Army.—The following General Order has just been issued from the Adjutant-General's office: "In order to secure a fair distribution of tickets among soldiers in the field, who by the laws of their respective States are entitled to vote at the approaching elections, the following rules and regulations are prescribed: First—One agent for each army corps may be designated by the State Executive, or by the State Committee of each political party who on presenting his credential from the State Executive, or the Chairman of said Committee, shall receive from this Department a pass to the headquarters of the corps for which he is designated, with tickets, or proxies when required by State laws, which may be placed by him in the hands of such reliable and disinterested persons as he may select for distribution among officers and soldiers. Second—Civilian inspectors of each political party not to exceed one for each brigade, may in like manner be designated, who shall receive passes on application to the Adjutant-General, to be present on the day of election to see that the elections are fairly conducted. Third—No political speeches, harangues, or canvassing among the troops will be permitted. Fourth—Commanding officers are enjoined to take such measures as may be essential to secure freedom and fairness in the elections and that they be conducted with due regard to good order and military discipline. Fifth—Any officer or private who shall

wantonly destroy tickets or prevent their proper distribution among the legal voters, interfere with the freedom of the election or make any false or fraudulent return, will be deemed guilty of an offense against good order and military discipline and be punished by summary dismissal or court-martial. General Butler on the Rebellion. Major General Butler, now in command of the Army of the James, has written a letter to General Cameron on the prospects of the rebellion. We would like to give it entire, but our limited space forbids. General Butler probably knows better than any man on this side the rebel lines the actual condition of the insurgent States, and their means of further resistance. It is known that Gen. Grant trusts largely to his facilities for acquiring information—facilities which arising from his position are improved to the utmost by his extraordinary professional talents. And this is the opinion of General Butler:

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With regard to the slavery question, Butler presents the case as follows: "Why not treat the slavery question according to the fact that slavery is a crime and is a crime which ought to be punished by the sword of justice? No political action can aid, no resolutions of conventions can hinder that result. The war, if prosecuted to the end, will accomplish all that the most ardent anti-slavery man can desire, so that if the war goes on to the bitter end for the restoration of the Union, then Slavery is no more, and all declarations that the war shall or shall not be carried on for the extinction of Slavery are futile and worse than useless. The war will extinguish slavery whether we wish it or not. Nay, it has extinguished Slavery, by rendering the slave worthless. In Charleston, to-day, a negro can be bought for \$300,00 Confederate money which sells for \$30 for one in gold, making the value of the negro, \$100. And this, with cotton at \$1.75 per pound in New York. Before the war, the same negro would bring \$1,000 in gold, with cotton at 12 cents in New York. The Presidential Election—A Striking Fact. The coming Presidential election will develop the striking fact, that notwithstanding the rebellion has been under way for over three years, an election will be held for President of the United States in November next, in every one of the Rebel States. If there shall be a single exception it will be Texas. The soldiers of Ohio, Iowa, Pennsylvania and other States will vote in the heart of Georgia, in Tennessee, in Alabama, in Mississippi, in Arkansas and in Louisiana; and the soldiers of Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and perhaps others, will vote in Virginia, the Carolinas, Florida and Louisiana. Besides the military election to be held in Tennessee, a regular election is to be held in that State under State laws. Thus there will be balloting for President of the United States in 1864 in every one of the States from which the Secessionists confidently believed they had expelled that time-honored franchise in 1861. In at least three instances these elections will be held in the reconquered capitals of Rebel States—Little Rock, Nashville and Baton Rouge; and it is not improbable that by the 8th day of November the ballot-boxes may be opened in Milledgeville also, and even Richmond itself.

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