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FRIDAY MORNING, NOV. 21.

Important Operations in Louisiana.

Late in October Brig. Gen. Weitzel, by order of Gen. Butler, left the river to Donaldsonville, 75 miles below New Orleans. Gen. Weitzel had in his command one regiment of colored men, called "Native Guards." Donaldsonville is on the Northwest side of the river, and is in the midst of the sugar plantations, one of the richest portions of Louisiana.

After landing and marching nine miles, he encountered the enemy in force, and defeated him after a sharp engagement, taking 268 prisoners. His own loss was 18 killed and 68 wounded. The loss of the enemy in killed and wounded was heavy. This much we mention now in brief, having given a more detailed report several days ago.

In a later report, (November 1st,) General Weitzel writes to Gen. Butler:

Since my last dispatch I have received information that the enemy has evacuated Berwick's Bay, and in such a hurry (as our gunboats were in sight) that they left over 400 wagon loads of sugar behind at Brashear city. To substantiate this report, the negroes are already returning. Now, what shall I do with them?

I have already twice as many negroes in and around my camps as have soldiers within.

I cannot feed them; as a consequence, they must feed themselves.

The community, of whom already quite a number have taken the oath of allegiance, is in great terror, fearing trouble with the negroes.

They beg me to allow them to retain their arms. I cannot do this without authority from headquarters.

Last night my picknets were fired upon by some person armed with a shot gun. This would make it prudent to allow only those to retain arms who have taken the oath or are paroled. Please to give me instructions on this point.

There is plenty of sugar here. I have already collected a large number of cavalry and artillery horses and mules. Please now organize that railroad properly, with a Superintendent and proper employes, so that we may run regular trains and not have our rolling stock ruined by bad management.

I have sent a force up Berwick's Bay to take possession of the road from Tigerville, to Berwick's Bay, communicate with the gunboats, and repair the bridges across Bayou Boeuf.

I will have the bridge across Bayou Lafourche completed at 4 o'clock this afternoon, and the bridge at Terrebonne will be completed to-morrow.

Then, when the Bayou Bourf bridge is ready, the whole road will be all right to Brashear City.

All the planters, nearly, wish to make their very excellent this year's crop, if I will order back their negroes, *or allow them to make some arrangements with them.*

Neither Col. Thomas nor Col. Stafford have yet been seen by me. I understood that the Native Guards were to picket the road. They want to hold Boutte Station, Bayou Des Allemands Bridge, Tigerville, Bayou Lafourche Bridge, Terrebonne Bridge, etc. Do this and throw out pickets, so as to communicate with each other.

The telegraph should be repaired at once. I have undisputed possession of the country now, and this part of the campaign is a perfect success.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
G. WEITZEL, Brig. Gen. U. S. Vols.

In another dispatch he says:

I have the honor to report that I yesterday sent a force up the Bayou to communicate with the gunboats above Labadieville. The hospital had been undisturbed. All the people in the neighborhood were vieing with each other in kindness and attention to the wounded on both sides. This country is as safe to travel in now as Canal street.

All this is very important, for it indicates that the rebellion is supressed on the western side of the Mississippi in Louisiana, and that slavery has expired with it. The capture of *four hundred wagon loads of negroes* is the strangest announcement we have seen. The gallant General is puzzled to know what to do with them; for he has twice as many contrabands as soldiers and negroes must eat. The planters, however, want them back; but the General cannot send them back as slaves, for to do so would be an express violation of the orders of the President. It appears that there is a splendid crop of cane in the fields, and "all the planters wish to make their crop this year."

As the next best thing they can do, the planters ask the General "to allow them to *make some arrangements with them,*" that is, with the negroes. Against that there is neither law nor order; for those arrangements can be nothing more nor less than to take them into their employ as hired men, and at rates of wages to be agreed upon between the parties.

How easily and naturally do the most perplexing questions solve themselves when people march boldly up to them! Here, where the relative numbers of whites and blacks are enormously on the side of the latter, there is no trouble, no violence, no insurrection—nothing but a change of relation. The *master* becomes an *employer*, the *slave* a *hired man.*

General Butler's Latest Order.

General Butler has issued another of his characteristic orders, again applying one of the rebel regulations to the case of federal soldiers as follows:

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE GULF, New Orleans, Nov. 6, 1862.

"HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT No. 1, CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA, New Orleans, La., March 20, 1862.

"GENERAL ORDERS No. 90. * * * XII. All process from any court of law or equity in the parishes of Orleans and Jefferson, for the ejection of the families of soldiers now in the service of the government, either on land or water, for rent past due, is hereby suspended, and no such collections shall be forced until further orders. * * * *

"By command of Maj. Gen. LOVELL.

"J. G. PICKETT, Assist. Adjut. Gen."

The above extract from orders of the rebel General Lovell is accepted and ordered, *as referring to the families of soldiers and sailors now in the service of the United States.*

By command of Maj. Gen. BUTLER:

GEO. C. STRONG, Assist. Adjut. Gen.

THE Trenton *Gazette* of Tuesday, states that Gen. McClellan left that city on the day previous to transact some business in New York. It adds: "The curiosity to see the General appears to have died out, and we hear very little on the subject. We understand that, for the serenade last week, invitations were sent liberally to different parts of the State, in order to call out a crowd."

Washington News.

[Telegraphed to the New York Times]

WASHINGTON, Tuesday, Nov. 18.

LATEST FROM THE ARMY.

Up to 9 o'clock this evening, intelligence at headquarters of the army runs to this effect: All quiet along the front. Rumors prevail of an engagement between our rear column and the enemy, but diligent inquiry fails to corroborate the reports, which are believed to be groundless.

THE NEW ROUTE TO RICHMOND.

It appears that the route to Richmond, via Fredericksburg, is the one always advocated by that natural commander, Phil. Kearney, who greatly preferred it to the Peninsular road, or that by way of Manassas.

THE GOVERNMENT AND GEN. M'CLELLAN.

The friends of the Administration, in reply to the censures of Gen. McClellan's partisans, confidently assert that the Government is in possession of letters from that officer, written during his Peninsular campaign, admitting that the force under his command was ample for the object he had in view. They also assert the existence of evidence, that while he was seemingly anxious to continue his operations against Richmond from that base, he was actually intriguing to be recalled; and that he anxiously awaited those orders to that effect, against which he so vehemently remonstrated when they were received.

HOW GEN. BURNSIDE RETREATS.

A wounded soldier who served in Burnside's expedition in North Carolina, mentions that at Newbern, on one occasion, our troops, on account of the numerous batteries they had to encounter, becoming discouraged, were falling back; an officer rode up in haste to Burnside and asked if he would order a retreat. "Retreat!" said Burnside, "yes, right into the face of the enemy. That is how I want to retreat." A forward movement was immediately ordered, and, by a *forward retreat*, our troops carried all before them, driving the enemy from their intrenchments, and capturing all their strongholds.

THE FOSYAL CURRENCY.

The pressure for small currency continues. A gentleman from Dubuque, Iowa, called on Assistant Secretary Harrington to-day to procure $696 for circulation in that city, and seemed quite thankful for the assurance that that sum should be sent to the Surveyor there next week.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF WAR.

Charles A. Dana, late editor of the New York *Tribune*, has been appointed Assistant Secretary of War in place of Mr. Wolcott, resigned. Mr. Dana has long been known as a man of rare executive powers, and his appointment cannot fail greatly to augment the efficiency of the Department in which he is to occupy so important a position.

The Situation in Virginia.

On this subject, the Philadelphia *Press* makes the following remarks:

That Gen. Burnside has changed his front in the face of the enemy creates no little surprise. Some weeks ago we observed in this column that the campaign inaugurated by Gen. McClellan with the intention of seizing the Blue Ridge gaps, and marching upon the enemy's communication and lines of retreat between Gordonsville and Charlottesville, was ended, for the hoped-for result was not obtained—General Lee and his army having reached Gordonsville in safety before our advanced cavalry had reached a point within twenty miles of it; and it became optional with Lee to fight a battle with our superior forces, at the foot of the mountain, or fall back slowly and securely to his fortified base at Richmond. As it was most impolitic in the rebel commander to risk a heavy engagement with little hope of success, he has retreated to his capital, leaving a force in the Shenandoah Valley as an army of observation and occupation for foraging and obtaining information.

The advantages of moving to Fredericksburg are very evident. It may be no better or safer point from which to operate against Richmond than Culpepper, because the former position may be as easily turned or flanked as the latter. But Fredericksburg is an excellent point for a supply depot, because we can use the Potomac and Rappahannock rivers for the transportation of supplies all the winter through, assisted by the railroad from Acquia Creek. Again, the difficulty of waging war in Virginia renders it necessary, that a large army in active operation should be instantly connected with its supply depot by a railroad, and this will be found leading from Fredericksburg all the way to Richmond. Two days' march along this road will bring our army to a point where it can obtain supplies from points on the Ware, York, James, and Rappahannock rivers. Three or four days' march from Fredericksburg will bring us in front of Richmond again, and give the Army of the Potomac a reinforcement of 50,000 men, besides wooden and iron-clad gunboats in abundance. This route is the short one also, and by taking it we force the rebels immediately from the Shenandoah valley and open the road to Staunton for General Cox.

Burnside Ahead of the Confederate Army in the Race to Richmond.

A glance at any good map of Virginia will show the reader that the fine march made by Burnside on Sunday and yesterday has brought his army from ten to twenty miles nearer Richmond than the main portion of the rebel army was, probably, last morning. Else the latter moved to counteract Burnside's movements, sooner, much sooner, than could reasonably have been expected; as it was doubtless twenty-four hours after Burnside moved before the rebel generals comprehended what his movements meant, and then it probably took them twenty-four hours more—or until last night—before they could get fairly in motion to head Burnside off from Richmond.

We now believe that he will get to Hanover Junction at least before they can throw a sufficient force before it to dispute its possession by the Army of the Potomac.

Much, however, depends, we opine, upon the energy with which our construction corps prosecutes the work before it; as supplies of all kinds must speedily follow Burnside, to secure the triumph of his plans.

The rebel General Jackson has been fairly maneuvered out into the cold. It is hardly possible that his corps can participate in the great battle for the possession of Richmond. If he has, as is asserted, 70,000 men, then he has quite half the whole rebel army of the Potomac, clear up at the head of the valley; at least twelve days' fair marching from Richmond, with Burnside's army not six days