

THE WAR ON THE MISSISSIPPI.

News from Port Hudson.

Memphis, Feb. 15.—Advices from below state that the Rebels at Port Hudson are communicating with the Gulf by way of Atchafalaya river. The Queen of the West, as soon as she is repaired, will interrupt that movement.

One million bales of cotton are below Helena, awaiting General Grant's permission to ship them.

"General Sherman is waging a ridiculous crusade against the press, but it will prove useless."

Cairo, Feb. 17.—A party of guerrillas fired into the "Farragut," at Cypress Bend, and killed several of her crew. She was towing coal, and would have been captured, but was saved by the gun-boat Rattler.

Another Gun-boat Passes the Batteries at Vicksburg.

Chicago, Feb. 18.—A special despatch from Memphis, dated yesterday, say that the new Monitor gun-boat Indiana ran the blockade at Vicksburg on Friday night.

In spite of the precautions taken, the Rebels discovered the Indiana, and the various batteries fired with each other in their efforts to sink the gun-boat. She, however, passed down safely.

The Indiana carries two big guns in a turret. She is new, measures four hundred and forty-two tons, and was built at Cincinnati.

Expedition to Yazoo Pass—Affairs at Vicksburg.

Memphis, Feb. 14, via Cairo, Feb. 16.—The Bulletin has advices from Yazoo Pass to Wednesday. The steamer Moderator and a gun-boat went up the bayou and found the enemy on the banks, who fired upon the Moderator, cutting off one man's ear. We killed six of the enemy, and found a number of negroes in a starving condition and brought them away. They are now at Memphis. The gun-boat remained at the bayou. Another force is said to be engaged cutting through a canal and completing navigation up Yazoo Pass.

The Bulletin has news from Vicksburg to Monday. The sickness of the troops was confined principally to those of the former expedition up the Yazoo. The general health is much improving, and affairs wearing a better aspect.

The transports are still at Young's Point working on the canal, which is progressing slowly. It is understood that another will be cut from Lake Providence via Tennesse and Red rivers, to the Mississippi river.

The guerrillas near Wolf bridge yesterday tore up the railroad track, and buried some cotton.

Rebel Gun-boat Reunited for the United Service, &c., &c.

The Rebel gun-boat General Price is undergoing repairs here. She had steam up to-day for the first time since she was captured at Memphis. She will soon be completed, and is to be one of the finest boats in the service.

The railroad from Columbus to Jackson is nearly finished. Passengers now have to walk only about one mile around in an unfinished gap.

Colonel Bissell's Sappers and Miners left Memphis for Vicksburg on the 12th.

Last Wednesday, as the ram Fulton, with a large load of coal, was proceeding to Vicksburg, she was fired into by the Rebels, at Cypress Bend, from 12-pounder field pieces. The steam pipes were broken, which rendered the machinery useless! One negro was killed and another so frightened, he jumped overboard and was drowned. The boat and barge were hit in twenty-four places before the enemy could make a capture. The rams Rattler and Wilson came up from below, and scattered them by throwing shells. It is not known that any of the Rebels were killed. The Fulton was towed down to the nearest port.

The work of cutting an entrance for boats in Lake Providence from the river, is progressing with spirit, and ready access is expected to the Black, Ouachita and Red rivers.

Gen. Gorman is pursuing with energy the work of clearing out the old passage so as to make it practicable to Blackwater. There is depth of water enough, but stumps, trees and vegetation choke up the passage.

If the pass is cleared, it gives admission to Blackwater, hence to Tallahatchie, whence boats can reach the bar of Vicksburg via Yazoo river.

General Gorman has a strong picket force half a mile ahead of the working party, which has had several skirmishes with the enemy, and some men were killed on both sides.

The enemy are planting cannon at the important spot where the pass enters the Blackwater, and accumulating a force there. They are engaged in filling the channel with trees, to delay the work of the Federals.

On Wednesday the clearing had advanced to within two miles of the point of junction with Blackwater.

The Rebel capital of Louisiana is changed from Opelousas to Shreveport. The Governor is to call out the whole militia immediately. Wheat in Alabama is promising.

The Mississippi Legislature passed a law that not over three acres of cotton should be

planted to the planter, under a penalty of five hundred dollars per acre, half to go to the informer.

The gun-boat Julietia ran aground between here and Memphis. Two boats endeavored to pull it off, and pulled off the whole boat. It is there yet, in bad condition, and the crew aboard.

The steamer Rowena, recently seized at Island No. 10, for transporting contraband goods, was sent to Memphis in charge of three naval officers, with orders to discharge Government freight, and bring the boat back to Cairo as a prize.

Visit of the President to the Fortifications in Virginia—An Experiment and Explosion.

Taking advantage of the exceedingly pleasant weather of yesterday, we rode over into Virginia, and visited several of the numerous defensive works there. On our return, we thought we discovered something of a naval character. It appeared like a new work in a new place, and presented a formidable appearance.

Seeing a number of carriages, and some thousand or two people, citizens as well as soldiers, in the vicinity, all looking, with great interest, at some object directly in front of them. Our curiosity was excited to ascertain the cause which had drawn together so large an assemblage of our citizens.

Arriving on the ground, we soon learned that His Excellency the President, was there, accompanied by the Secretary of War, General Heintzelman, General Barnard, General Abercrombie, and many other officers of less note.

The Rebels were so much taken by surprise that they did not even fire a shot, but immediately commenced retreating. So well directed was our fire on them, that they could not even carry off a caisson that they had captured from our forces, but were compelled to abandon it, after two fruitless attempts to destroy it by fire.

After having dispersed the main body of the enemy, I stationed the Robert and Silver Lake below the town, to throw shell up the ravine and prevent the Rebels from returning to carry off the wounded, while the Lexington, Fair Play, St. Clair and Brilliant went above and shelled the roads leading out to the eastward.

Supposing the retreating forces would follow the river for a short distance, I sent the Lexington and St. Clair on up to shell the woods, harass and annoy them as much as possible, while this boat and the Brilliant lay opposite the upper ravine, and throw shells up the roads.

About 10 P. M., we ceased firing, with the exception of now and then a random shell up the roads. At 11 P. M., learning from Colonel Harding that the enemy had entirely disappeared, we ceased firing, and took position to guard the roads approaching the town.

Although much of our firing was at random, we have the gratification of knowing that scarcely a projectile went amiss, and that out of the 140 buried to-day the gun-boats can claim their share.

Even when the Lexington and St. Clair went above, many of their shells fell right in the midst of the retreating Rebels, killing and wounding many.

It is reported that the attacking force numbering some 4500, with eight pieces of artillery, under command of Major-General Wheeler, Brigadier-General Forrest and Wharton. It is certainly very gratifying to us to know that this entire force was cut up, routed and despoiled of its prey by the timely arrival of the gun-boats, and that Col. Harding and his gallant little band were spared to wear the honors they had so fairly won.

At first I regretted that I was not here with the gun-boats sooner, but, upon reflection, I do not think I could better have arranged the time had it been in my power.

Had we been here before Wheeler he would not have made the attack, but most probably would have marched on Fort Henry.

Had we arrived during the day he would have seen our strength, and would have retreated with but little loss. Arriving as we did, after dark, and when he least expected us, and was so sanguine of success, we caught his forces arranged in the most favorable position to receive a raking fire from our guns.

The officers and men were very glad to have a shot at these river infestors, and only regret that they did not remain within reach of our guns a little longer. As it is, they claim the honor of dispersing them and saving Fort Donelson.

Taking up our position close to the President, who appeared sufficiently bold to suit the state of our nervous system at the time, we watched for the fougasse. We cannot be sure that we saw it; and, if we did, we are sure we cannot describe it, but we heard it deep, heavy, and angry explosion, as if some of the internal fires of the earth were escaping, breathing forth earth and smoke, stones and exploding shells.

Immediately after this explosion, there was a rush of the soldiers to see the fougasse, but a heap of ruins only showed where it had been placed.

We advise all our friends who may be fond of the terrible, and who would realize the scenes without the blood—through which assailing columns will have to approach this city, to go over to Vicksburg when next a fougasse exploded. For ourselves we rode away congratulating ourselves that we had so much of war, and realizing the force of the congratulations of the President, when he exclaimed that "nobody was hurt." —Washington Republican, of the 14th instant.

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The Official Facts of the Rebel Repulse at Fort Donelson.

United States Gun-Boat "Fair Play," off Dover, Tenn., Feb. 4, 1863.—Sir:—I have the honor to report that, on the 3d inst., I left Smithland, Ky., with a fleet of transports and the gun-boat Lexington, Fair Play, St. Clair, Brilliant, Robt and Silver Lake, as convoy up the Cumberland river.

When about twenty-four miles below Dover I met the steamer Wild Cat, with a message from Colonel Harding, commandant of the post at Dover, informing me that his pickets had been driven in, and that he was attacked in force. I immediately left the transports, and made signal to the gun-boat to follow on up as fast as possible. A short distance below the town I met another steamer, bringing intelligence that the place was entirely surrounded.

Pushing on up with all possible speed, I arrived here about 8 P. M., and found Colonel Harding's force out of ammunition, and entirely surrounded by the Rebels in overwhelming numbers, but still holding them in check.

The enemy not expecting gun-boats, had unwisely posted the main body of his army in line of battle in the graveyard at the west end of the town, with his left wing resting in a ravine that led down to the river, giving us a chance to throw a raking fire along this line.

Simultaneously the gun-boat opened fire up this ravine, into the graveyard, and over into the valley beyond, where the enemy had horses hitched, and most probably kept his reserves.

The Rebels were so much taken by surprise that they did not even fire a shot, but immediately commenced retreating. So well directed was our fire on them, that they could not even carry off a caisson that they had captured from our forces, but were compelled to abandon it, after two fruitless attempts to destroy it by fire.

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The schooner Hanover was captured on the 31st ult., off Cape Hainault, by the pirate Retribution. The presumption is that they were all taken by the same rebel vessel.

SECOND DESPATCH

Boston, Feb. 19.—The Chastain it is ascertain'd, was burned on the 27th ult., off Altareta rock by the pirate Alabama. Capt Semmes took out all the nautical instruments and \$800 in gold. Her crew was landed at St. Domingo.

The Alabama also captured and burned on the 26th ult., the Golden Rule, off cape Tiburon.

The schooner Hanover, from Boston, for Aux Cayes, was captured by a pirate off l'Aude Hainault, Hayti. The crew was landed.

Rebels at Culpeper Court House.

Washington, Feb. 2, 1863.—Scouts report that Colonel Fritz Hugh Lee is at Culpeper Court House with two thousand cavalry. His pickets are thrown out nine miles to Hazel River, on the road to Warrenton and to the Rappahannock river, on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad. No Rebel force, of any kind, is now north of those two points, except White's farmer guerrillas, in the Shenandoah valley and near Leesburg.

Resignation of Gen. Cameron as Minister to Russia.

Washington, Feb. 2, 1863.—The President has received a letter from Gen. Cameron, resigning his position of minister to St. Petersburg.

C. M. Clay his Successor.

Cassius M. Clay having been reappointed, will receive his instructions, and proceed at once to St. Petersburg.

LETTER FROM THE ARMY.

HEADQUARTERS FIFTH ARMY CORPS, February 16, 1863.

DEAR PILOT:—The morning is so pleasant, and all nature so joyful, that I cannot refrain from sending you greeting. On Saturday night we suffered another severe storm, accompanied by rain. In consequence thereof the roads are again impassable, save by six stalwart mules attached to an empty wagon. Any thing like moving heavy artillery is altogether impossible; and the probabilities are of a protracted sojourn, by the Army of the Potowmack in its present location. The attention of every one here is attracted towards Charleston and Vicksburg; and not a few interested ones pay some attention to the doings of certain State Legislatures.

As news is wanting, we will append a poetical attempt of our own. This species of authorship is altogether at variance with our style; and we expect the subject to recommend it to the perusal of your readers, rather than any merit in the production. As the age of criticism is past, we expect to commit this poetical sin with impunity. Here it is:

The Charge of Tyler's Brave Brigade.

Lay the dead in hundreds,
Scattered o'er the plain,
Groaned and shrieked the wounded,
More numerous than the slain.

Mary's crest is still unsealed—
There still the Rebs remain,
Thrice charged the Union army—
Thrice were their efforts vain.

Shall night her ebon curtains drop,
And hide these scenes of woe?
Sure blood enough already

Has shed the murd'rous foe!
Not yet! Still another order!

With twilights dark'ning shade,
Charge the works—the first brigade!

This order Humphrey made.

Forward boys!—the bugle sounds!
A line is formed, and onward bounds
To death, or still more painful wounds—

Tyler's brave brigade.
Hills to the right of them,
Hills to the left of them,
Hills in the front of them,
Cannon-crowned all.

Volleyed and thundered,
These weapons of hell.
Shrieked in succession
The murderous shell.

Whistled the minnie ball,
Whistled—brave victims fall,
Whistled, shrieked, thundered all,

These weapons of hell,
Into the valley of death,
For some one had blundered;

Charged Tyler's brave brigade—
Drive sixteen hundred.

Bravely did they charge, and well,
Spectators wondered.

Bravely stood the shrieking shell,