

THE WAR IN VIRGINIA.

As premised in our last, although stoutly opposed by the Federals' advance, consisting mainly of Buford's cavalry, the advance of Gen. Lee's army, comprising the command of Gen's. Longstreet and Hill, forced a passage through Thornton's Gap of the Blue Ridge—which was accomplished on Thursday and Friday, 23d and 24th ult.—making their encampment between Culpepper and Gordonsville—the Federals having been compelled to fall back.

Gen. Ewell—whose obituary was heralded through the country contemporaneously with the reported death of Longstreet and Hill, in battle of Gettysburg—being placed, with his command, to guard the various passes of the Blue Ridge, covered Hill and Longstreet's flank and rear—rendering the manœuvre of the Confederates a complete success, evidently disconcerting the sanguine expectations and plans of Gen. Meade, and producing a degree of uneasiness among his advanced detachments, which seriously reversed the order of their forward movement.

Immediately following this movement by the Confederates, the Grand Army of the North—the semi-official title given to Lee's command—took position near Culpepper—Gen. Lee's headquarters, as indicated, being at Strasburg, four miles south east of Culpepper.

Gen. Buford, who had been forced to retire before the advancing columns of the Confederates, having obtained strong infantry and cavalry supports, on the 1st inst., determined not to be out-generated by a retreating foe, crossed the Rappahannock at the Railroad station on the Orange and Alexandria road and thence, with his whole force, proceeded towards Culpepper, driving before him the enemy's cavalry, consisting of Jones's and Hampton's brigades, Cobb's Georgia legion and the "Jeff. Davis" legion.

When near Culpepper his valorous hosts were suddenly brought to a halt by a furious and unexpected assault from a heavy body of Confederate infantry. He was not to be frightened off this time, however; and ordering his troops in battle array, the work of death commenced—which lasted until dark—both assailants fighting with desperation—when Buford made the best of his way back to Brandy Station—having unquestionably found Culpepper rather too spic for a camping-place. The loss on both sides is reported as having been considerable.

Taking the line of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, between Rapidan Station and Orange Court House, as a basis for flanking operations, Lee's army, with its depot of supplies at Gordonsville, occupied itself in manœuvring, evidently preparing for either a vigorous defense, if attacked by Meade, or a renewal of hostilities upon the first opportune moment.

As to the movements of the army of the Potomac, being almost wholly unadvised either by mail or dispatch, we can only premise: that, as usual, as was announced of "Fighting Joe Hooker" on the eve of his removal, it is where it ought to be. This "painful reticence," as goes the stereotyped phrase, of the military censorship of the press, observed in regard to army movements, added to the proverbial misrepresentations of reporters, acting at the instigation, as stated, of paper generals, whose brilliant schemes have ever suffered serious frustration from the merest trifles—a penny-a-liner's speculations, or a visitor's exaggeration relative to what he saw and heard at camp—leaves the country at large in a state of "blessed ignorance" concerning the doings and whereabouts of the Grand Army totally defective as a mode of re-assuring a people who have learned to be distrustful of their leaders, while it cannot detract one iota from the hitherto well-advised schedule of its most secretly devised plans and projects within the purview of an ever-watchful, daring and wily foe.

We ought to be thankful, doubtless that the grace of our Government Censor accords us news on any terms—else, with the withdrawal of the full details with which we are favored concerning the Confederate army, its condition, location and movements, with the hopes, prospects and plans of its Generals, we should all at once and, involuntarily become absolute know-nothings in the conduct and progress of the great "War for Freedom"—and the clanking of the tyrant's chain?

might be our only premonition of ultimate inglorious defeat and subjugation.

We are permitted to know, by a dispatch of the 12th inst., from Washington, that the army of the Potomac was being increased at the rate of one thousand per day by drafted men. We are also informed that Genl. Meade had issued an order holding the people for ten miles on each side of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, in the vicinage of his camp, responsible for any depredations on the road by guerrillas. In case of any injury to the road they would be impressed as laborers to repair the damages. If these measures should not stop depredations, the General commanding would direct that the entire inhabitants of the country along the road shall be put across the lines and their property taken for Government use.

Reports from correspondents have been conflicting in relation to the reinforcement of Lee's army. The Baltimore correspondent of the *New York Herald*, however, claiming precedence as a writer of hitherto unimpeached veracity, says that his information—never at fault hitherto—places the number of reinforcements at thirty thousand—making Lee's present strength one hundred and twenty-five thousand—all veteran troops. Besides this, he adds, the conscripts pouring in will soon swell his numbers to one hundred and fifty thousand. The main body of this vast army is massed on the line of the Rapidan, with Lee's head quarters at Gordonsville.

It would also seem that Lee is organizing new batteries of artillery, as artillery drills with target practice, take place daily in Shenandoah valley, where, also new cavalry squadrons are being drilled. The guns are brass pieces and, if not new, are so bright that they look new. Twelve of these batteries are reported at one place in Shenandoah valley.

There are reports current that Lee is now making active preparations for an offensive movement of some character. A repetition of the Pennsylvania and Maryland invasion of August last is hinted at. A falling back of Meade to the defense of Washington and the establishment of the Potomac as a base-line is also rumored. The cause assigned for this latter movement is a policy on the part of the present military authorities to await the successful termination of the attack on Charleston and other Southern points, after which a combined and overwhelming advance on Richmond, from the North and South is contemplated. The long inactivity of a vast army, it is fully apparent, involves an immensely useless expenditure of greenbacks—making no estimate of the loss of time and the protraction of the war.

At this late date, it is officially stated that the total number of Federal wounded in the three days' battle at Gettysburg was a fraction over fourteen thousand. Are we to infer that the number of killed and captured have not yet been estimated?

FEDERAL RETALIATION.

The Administration organ at Washington—the *National Republican*—of the 1st inst. announces to the country, the world and the "rest of mankind," that President Lincoln had authorized the issuing of an order that henceforth it would be the policy and intention of the government to retaliate in kind for every case of ill treatment of our officers and men—black or white—by the rebel authorities, by hanging for hanging, shooting for shooting and imprisonment for imprisonment, etc.

Pursuant to the letter and spirit of this order, in every instance where it is known that a black man in the military service of the government of the United States is taken and sold into slavery, the Federal military authorities will be instructed to select a Confederate prisoner and confine him to hard labor in some prison—there to remain until the black man is liberated.

It is further solemnly declared, in this retaliative pronouncement, that the government maintains the right and, possessing the power, will exact promptly and to the letter, that, like the Federal flag, the Federal uniform must and shall be respected.

Thus, it becomes apparent, in the progress of National disintegration, we have already reached that declivity which plunges the nation into the fearful alternative of inaugurating the law of retaliation.

We care not here to discuss who first pro-

voked, by barbarous act or conduct towards prisoners, non-combatants, or helpless women and children, incompatible with "civilized warfare," an introduction of the *lex talionis*. The association of the term *civil* with any species of bloodshedding whether singly by the midnight assassin's knife or by the ten thousand slain in magnificent displays of the pomp and circumstance of war, we can only regard as at least a gross misnomer—an unwarrantable abuse of plain English.

The very existence of war implies, if not necessitates, all that is atrocious, horrid, barbarous and inhuman—whatever to the contrary may have been the ostensible restraints set up by national agreement for the plausible amelioration of its horrors. If open rapine, unprotected murder and devastation have not marked the pathway of the conqueror, then has he not fulfilled the instincts that impelled the hostile invasion, or he has been shorn of the power to inflict the punishment in reserve for a presumptive, insolent and conquered foe.

To retaliate for the execution of two Confederate spies apprehended in Rosecrans' department early in the summer, the Confederates ordered the execution of two prisoners of war—Capt. Sawyer and Flynn. As soon as the Washington authorities became cognizant of this act, Confederate prisoners—among them Gen. W. H. F. Lee, son of the renowned Gen. R. E. Lee—were placed in confinement, with orders from Gen. Halleck that, as soon as official or authentic information shall have been received of the execution of Capt. Sawyer and Flynn by the Confederates, the younger Lee and other prisoners designated are to be at once executed.

Though these are but solitary instances and at a time when the tenure of human life is most precarious, they will serve to show the animus of the war. Nor can these cool-blooded ensamples of retaliatory vengeance—however much demanded by popular clamor or Christian retributive justice, decide the great pending issue, or bring about a speedy termination of the conflict. They can but relentlessly add to the atrocities of a fratricidal war which, as yet, is fraught with no bright promise of hope to the cause of true freedom or humanity.

ALARMING PHYSICAL INABILITY OF THE COUNTRY.

The three hundred thousand conscription draft has been in progress in the Eastern States for some time. The class first to be enrolled, if we rightly remember, includes all unmarried men between the ages of twenty and forty-five and all married men between the ages of twenty and thirty-five.

As the draft progresses it discloses, in the vast proportion of exemptions, an extent of physical impotency which even those most conversant with the awful degeneracy of the time—in the main resulting from licentiousness—were scarcely prepared to credit.

The *Hartford (Conn.) Times* says the exemptions of drafted men by surgeons' certificates in various parts of New England, since the commencement of the Federal conscription, amount to the enormous proportion of seventy-three per cent. Of the balance it would seem that, as a general thing, twenty out of twenty-seven have fled to parts unknown, and the strong probability is that in most of these cases the fugitives will make good their escape in spite of the activity of the Provost Marshals—leaving the nett result of at most seven men out of every one hundred drafted who will be mustered into service.

So numerous were the exempts in Boston, says one of the papers published in that orthodox city of literature and Christian religion, that the government recently sent one or more inspectors there to ascertain, if possible the cause of the excessive debility prevailing there. Whether those credentialed inquisitors of the people's moral and physical status did really satisfy themselves as to the cause of such "excessive debility" the public are not informed. We apprehend, however, that a moonlight or midnight inspection of Ann Street, its surroundings and influences would have furnished "proof as strong as ho'y writ" that there were very sufficient causes existing for "excessive debility"—to remove which the whole fabric of "Christian civilization" must be radically remodeled; or, to effect a more salutary remedy, utterly abolished.

The extent of the physical depreciation in

Boston may be inferred from the facts as published—that in the first district, the number of conscripts who presented themselves to the board of enrolment one day was 68—of whom 49 received exemption papers. In the third district, the same day, 80 were presented—63 of whom were exempted for various causes. In the fourth district the board examined 140, and of these 129 were furnished certificates of exemption.

Can mother Earth herself escape defilement under the ponderous weight of the moral and physical corruption of her inhabitants, who have "transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance and broken the everlasting covenant?"

SECESSION IN SECESSIA.

Discordant elements are being rapidly precipitated upon the devoted heads of the adventurous and undaunted defenders of Southern State rights and Southern institutions. Besides the reported disaffection of the Confederate troops from North Carolina, Tennessee and Mississippi—who, it is said, have been deserting by thousands, declaring that they are tired of the war and that they have nothing more to fight for, since Vicksburg and Port Hudson have fallen—the people of North Carolina, as reported, are experiencing a fiery war of words at home.

The *Raleigh Standard*—the official paper of the State—has assumed unequivocal ground against the slaveocracy—denouncing Jeff. Davis as a repudiator, in whom no confidence can be placed and whose efforts to establish a Southern Confederacy will be a failure—but advocating a resumption of its former Federal relations—the idea of re-union being the darling of its choice—having, doubtless suffered a degree of self-denial no longer tolerable, if it has not positively become lean and half-famished from living on the few "pickings and stealings" that were run through the gauntlet of Uncle Sam's blockade.

Other North Carolina papers bitterly denounce the *Standard's* course as traitorous and demand its prompt suppression. The *Standard* replies that Gov. Vance will uphold it and that, if attempts are made to use physical force to suppress that paper they will be met by physical force.

The old complaint is reiterated by the *Standard*, that North Carolina has been maltreated by the Confederacy; that the State has furnished ninety-five thousand soldiers for this "causeless war"—of whom forty thousand have been killed or wounded; that she has supplied more than her just quota and that the North Carolinians have been almost invariably placed in the front ranks on the battle-field.

These are grievous complaints, surely; but, if these troops were transferred to the Federal side, who would insure them from being there, also, placed in the front ranks as some award for their gallant services rendered the Confederates? Alas, for North Carolina! Who shall redress her wrongs?

EXCURSION NORTH.—On Wednesday morning last, the 19th inst., Presidents Young, Kimball and Wells, Elders John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, Geo. A. Smith, Joseph Young, J. V. Long and several others started on a preaching excursion, intending to visit the settlements in all the northern counties before their return, which is expected to-day or to-morrow.

LAWRENCE, KANSAS, DESTROYED.—It is rumored that on the morning of the 21st the noted guerrilla chief, Quantrell, with some eight hundred bandits, entered the city of Lawrence, sacked and burned it—killing many of the citizens, who, it is reported, being completely surprised, were unprepared to offer the slightest resistance.

FOR THE EAST.—Hon. John F. Kinney and Marshal I. L. Gibbs are expecting to take the Overland Stage for the east to-morrow, Thursday. The Judge has some considerable business to attend to in Nebraska before going to Washington, as now intended, on or about the first of November, one month before the meeting of Congress.

ARRIVAL OF TRAINS.—Several merchant trains have arrived from the east within the last ten days. The first Church train, Capt. Mardock, is expected to arrive on Friday or Saturday next. The last company is reported to have left Florence on the 13th of August.