



ELIAS SMITH...EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

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TO THE PUBLIC.

I hereby inform the public that the DESERET NEWS is not and has not been an organ of mine, for, except matter accompanied with my name, I have only occasionally, and that too some time ago, known any more of the contents of the News, until after it is published, than I have of the copy furnished to the compositors of the New York Ledger.

BRIGHAM YOUNG.

G. S. L. City, Jan. 28, 1863.

PROGRESS OF THE WAR.

The reports concerning the operations of the several Federal fleets and armies against the enemy within the last few weeks, have been somewhat vague and uncertain, and often contradictory, but it is evident that the greatest exertion possible under the circumstances has been and is being made to wage successful war with the Confederates on land and water, and if possible to crush out the rebellion and thereby restore peace to the country. No great battles have been fought, but if several are not impending such events cannot be premised from appearances.

The fleets and armies prepared and concentrated along the Carolina coast for aggressive warfare, are represented to be large and well-appointed. A decisive blow, it is anticipated, will be struck on the Atlantic coast at no distant day. Several conflicts of minor importance have occurred in North Carolina, and evidently the war will be vigorously prosecuted in that region for a time to come and until the question of superiority of force shall be decided. To secure a favorable result in their behalf, the Confederates are making vigorous exertions and, judging from their statements which have gained publicity, they are very sanguine that success will crown their efforts. The Federal Government does not anticipate any reverses, and those intrusted with the execution of the gigantic schemes devised for the overthrow of the rebellion in that section of country, are said to be confident that victory in the approaching contests will invariably attend the Federal arms.

In the West, the war, as per report, is raging with unabated fury, and the Confederates have gained some advantage in several instances. They seemed determined to repossess themselves of the Cumberland and Tennessee rivers, and to retain possession of Vicksburg and Port Hudson, and thus thwart the design of the Government in opening the Mississippi to the commerce of the North Western States. Preparations for another attack on Vicksburg have been in progress ever since the repulse of Gen. Sherman, and inasmuch as the Mississippi river is unusually high for the season of the year, another attempt to turn the channel through the canal dug last summer, is being made by a heavy force under Gen. McCler and, which some seem to think will be effected, while others have no faith in the measure. Should the water which has been turned into the canal not form a channel of sufficient depth to enable the fleet to pass through, it is believed that the river will rise sufficiently to render the canal navigable for smaller craft, on which the army can be transported below the city, and thus prevent the delay on their way Southward that would attend the reduction of that stronghold, which some of the officers are of the opinion would take one hundred and fifty thousand men to storm.

News from that vicinity is looked for with great interest, as there is much depending on the success of Gen. Grant's expedition.

WOOD! WOOD!—Bethren, send on that wood. It is now wanted at this Office.

FROM THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC.

The army of the Potomac is, so far as known, still encamped at Falmouth, but how long it will remain there or what movement will next be made is extremely uncertain. It may occupy the left bank of the Rappahannock for months yet, and it may, either for health, or for offensive operations, have its headquarters removed to some point on the right bank of that noted river, and nearer Richmond before many more weeks shall have passed away. What the intentions of the War Department may be in relation to that renowned army, (the bravery of the officers and men composing which, has not been doubted) no one, not connected with the service, and it is believed that few if any of those who are, knows, as the greatest secrecy possible is maintained in regard to it, which is certainly a wise measure.

Some two weeks since, a report was sent over the wires in every direction throughout the North and West, that a forward movement had been made, that Gen. Burnside had crossed the Rappahannock, and that a terrible battle was raging in which Gen. Hooker had been mortally wounded; a report which few, if any, seemed to believe, and which was, so far as the crossing of the river and the fighting was concerned, a sheer fabrication. There was, however, a movement commenced, but it has not been made to appear whether it was really intended to cross the river and attack the enemy, or only as a feint to deceive the Confederates and ascertain their strength, of which the commanding officers were in doubt, as it had been reported, and to some extent believed, that the Confederate army at Fredericksburg had been greatly depleted by the withdrawal of heavy detachments to reinforce Gen. Bragg in Tennessee. The prevailing opinion seemed to be, that there was no intention of recommencing hostile operations at that time. If there was, circumstances prevented, as the river was not crossed and no fighting took place.

Gen. Burnside issued an order on the 20th, announcing to the army that they were about to meet the enemy once more; that the recent Federal victories in Tennessee, Arkansas and North Carolina, had weakened and divided the enemy, and that a favorable moment had arrived in which to give a death blow to the rebellion, and gain such a victory as was due to the country and the Federal arms. He referred to their former achievements, and informed the soldiers of the glorious future that awaited them, if they, with their officers would pull together, which if they would do, a great step would be taken under the providence of God towards restoring peace to the country, and the Government to its rightful authority.

It was announced that a movement was made by Hooker's, Franklin's and Sigel's corps on that day. The proposed plan of operations was also made public, which created doubts as to the real object of the movement. How many troops left camp has not been stated, neither how far they marched. The first thing with which the public was made acquainted after the troops left camp was, the prevalence of bad weather, which rendered the crossing of the river impossible. A few days of suspense followed, and then came the announcement made on the 26th ult. by Gen. Burnside, that by direction of the President, he had transferred the command of the army of the Potomac to Gen. Hooker. General's Franklin and Sumner were also relieved from their commands at the same time, and were succeeded, the former by Gen. Smith, and the latter by Gen. Crouch. The name of Gen. Hooker's successor has not transpired.

In his order transferring the command, Gen. Burnside briefly stated to the army that the short time he had been in command, although not fruitful of victory nor of any considerable advancement of the line, had demonstrated that the officers and men were not wanting in courage, patience nor endurance, which would have produced great results under more favorable circumstances. He exhorted them to continue to exercise virtue, to be true to their country and to the principles they had sworn to maintain, and to give to Gen. Hooker their full and cordial support, which if they would do, they would deserve success.

On being relieved from the command of the grand army, Gen. Burnside and several members of his staff had leave of absence given

them for thirty days. He subsequently tendered his resignation, which was not accepted. So says report.

It seems to be very generally believed in "military circles" that the Confederates are still in full force in the vicinity of Fredericksburg, and in the event an effort shall be made to cross the Rappahannock either above or below that place by the army of the Potomac, a most determined resistance will be made. Their hatred of the "Yankees" has not diminished.

CONFLICT WITH THE ALABAMA.

Intelligence recently received at New York from the department of the Gulf, represents that the fleet of steamers sent by Commodore Farragut to recapture the Harriet Lane, consisting of the sloop-of-war Brooklyn, the Hatteras and five other steamers, while off Galveston saw a steamer in the offing. The commander of the Hatteras was ordered to get his ship under way for the purpose of speaking the stranger. It was late in the day and nearly dark before the Hatteras came within hailing distance of the strange steamer. In answer to the inquiry as to the name of the suspicious craft, she replied, "Her Majesty's sloop of war Spitfire." The commander of the Hatteras ordered acting sailin' master Partridge with a boat and crew to go aboard the steamer, which was afterwards ascertained to have been the privateer Alabama.

The boat conveying the officer, had not, according to his report as published, shored off more than a ship's length, before the Alabama, alias Spitfire, poured a broadside into the Hatteras, which was replied to instantly. The Hatteras and Alabama on exchanging broadsides, both steamed ahead side by side, each firing into the other as fast as their guns could be loaded for about half an hour, Partridge endeavoring by the vigorous exertions of the men at the oars of his boat to overtake and get aboard of the Hatteras. He at one time in the dark, lost sight of the steamers, but subsequently came within view again, when he discovered that they had stopped, the Hatteras blowing off steam with the Alabama alongside, and from the cheering on board the privateer, he soon became convinced that the Hatteras had been boarded, and was a prize to the Alabama. To prevent falling into the hands of the enemy, officer Partridge retired in the direction of the fleet and was picked up some time in the course of the night.

The Brooklyn gave chase as represented, as soon as she could be got under way, but lost sight of the Alabama in the darkness of the night and gave up the pursuit. The Hatteras was found next morning sunk in nine fathoms of water. What became of her officers and crew was of course not known; those not killed in the conflict, will probably be sent home on parole in some merchant vessel subsequently captured by the Alabama, should she be so fortunate as to fall in with another craft of the kind before she will have been found, and "blown out of the water" by some one of the many powerful vessels which have been in search of her for many months. A better opportunity for capturing her than was presented when she was discovered off Galveston by a squadron of seven of the most formidable ships of war belonging to the navy may not be offered again very soon. There is some mystery attached to the circumstance of her decoying the Hatteras from the fleet, and after engaging, capturing and sinking her, effecting an escape.

FRENCH REVERSES IN MEXICO.

The latest intelligence received from Mexico does not present a very favorable state of things in relation to the success of the French arms in that country. It is reported that in a fog on the night of the 18th of December, a force of eight hundred Mexican cavalry, attacked the vanguard of the French army under Gen. Berthier, four thousand strong, before Puebla, and repulsed the invaders with great slaughter. It is stated that Gen. Berthier lost two thousand men, killed and wounded. The Mexicans, it is said, fought with desperation. The French were taken by surprise, and could not withstand the furious onslaught of the Mexicans, who in many instances lassoed the French officers and dragged them off, a mode of warfare unknown in their tactics, to which they could make no successful resistance. A sortie was subsequently made by ten thousand Mexicans, who marched from

Puebla, and attacked fourteen thousand men eight leagues from the city. The Mexicans were victorious, and the French were repulsed and retreated to Orizaba. They had abandoned Tampico, and their communication with Jalapa had been cut off, and also their communication between Orizaba and Vera Cruz.

The entire French force in Mexico was estimated at twenty-eight thousand, but it was expected that fifteen thousand more would arrive from France soon. The French troops are represented as having been in a most destitute condition at latest advices. They could get no supplies in the country, and were constantly surrounded by the Mexican guerillas, who harassed them by night and by day, and every soldier found straggling from camp was sure to be lassoed by the Mexicans, who are represented as determined to fight the invaders to the last.

The Mexican force is estimated at thirty-five thousand at Puebla, ten or twelve thousand between there and the capital, twelve thousand more at the capital, eight thousand in quarters, from twelve to fourteen thousand in Guerra, most of them badly armed. It is stated that the fortifications at Puebla mount two hundred guns, and those of the city of Mexico a like number. It is believed that the city of Mexico, Puebla and other places of importance, have been rendered impregnable to the French forces now in Mexico.

There are rumors of difficulties existing among the Mexican Generals, and that Donblado has committed suicide to prevent being taken prisoner by Mejia. Ortega and Comonfort, are also reported to be seriously opposed to each other. Deserters from the army are said to be of frequent occurrence, and five officers have been shot at Puebla for conspiracy.

ITEMS OF SOUTHERN NEWS.

Of the battle of Murfreesboro, the Richmond Examiner, of the 20th inst., says that Bragg's official report to the Confederate Government, was positive and satisfactory; that he had captured four thousand prisoners, two brigadiers, thirty-one pieces of cannon, and effected a general repulse of the enemy from all points save one, which it thinks is enough to constitute a claim to one of the most signal of all the victories of this war, if the combat can be considered as definitely concluded.

At Richmond, on the 23d of December, Confederate notes being the standard, gold was \$1,90a3,35, silver \$2,60a3, Virginia and North Carolina bank notes \$1,25a1,30; wheat \$4a4,10, corn meal \$3,50, flour \$20a25, bacon 70c, coffee \$3,75 per lb, sugar 99c, molasses \$1,75 per gail, salt 66c per lb, butter \$1,25, cheese \$1,10a1,25, candles 75a85c, lard 60a70c, potatoes \$4,50 per bush., apples \$15a16 per barrel.

The Confederate steamer Nashville lies in the great Ogchee river, fenced in, as it were, with stakes and torpedoes, with one man on board with a slow match lighted and a train of powder ready to blow her up on the approach of our gunboats. She is effectually blockaded and narrowly watched, and will probably never leave her anchorage again under the stars and bars of the Confederacy, so says a Federal officer, who has been within a half mile of her.

John Morgan, the guerrilla chief in Tennessee, recently married a young lady in Murfreesboro.

A letter from an officer on board the U. S. steamer Babb, off Charleston, says that Fort Sumter has been plated with railroad iron. Where has it come from?

The Richmond Enquirer says: "When the North wants peace she can obtain it by recognising the independence of the Southern States, and yielding the terms which justice demands."

Richmond papers of the 10th Jan., contain Gen. Magruder's dispatch regarding the recent capture of Galveston—of which the following is an extract:

"This morning, the 1st of January, at 3 o'clock, I attacked the enemy's fleet and garrison at this place, and captured the latter and the steamer Harriet Lane, and two barges and a schooner of the former. There were some four or five, escaped ignominiously under care of a flag of truce. I have about six hundred prisoners and a large quantity of valuable stores, arms, &c."

THEATRE—The management announces for this evening, the favorite comedy "The Secret Agent," and the popular farce "Domestic Economy."